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The Life and Times

of

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh-i-Dehli

By

Khaliq Ahmad Nizami

Idarah-i Adabyat-i Delli
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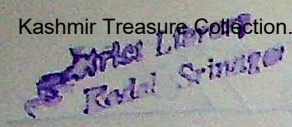

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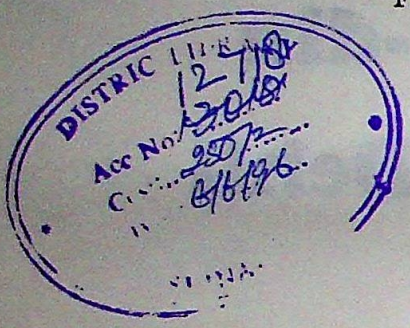

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Dedicated

to

that restless spirit of Divine Love and Devotion

which

made Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh's heart

'love's fev'rous citadel'

and he cried out in ecstasy

دنیا شه را و قیصر و خاقان را
دوزخ بد را بهشت مرنیکان را
تسبیح فرشته را ثنا مر انسان را
جانان ما را و جان ما جانان را

(Let the world be for the King, the Qaiser and
the Khaqan,
Let hell be (the punishment) for the wicked
and paradise (the reward) for the pious,
Let angels and human beings be busy in chanting
His praises,
For me is my Beloved and for Him is my life.)

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PREFACE

Some thirty two years back, in 1959, while editing *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, conversations of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud Chiragh-i Dehli, I felt the need of a comprehensive biography of the Shaikh. My involvement in some other projects at that time did not permit me to undertake it then but the desire to attempt it was never dormant. Having just completed a detailed biography of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, I thought it in the fitness of things to present a similar study of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh whose life forms a veritable denouement to the mystic activity initiated by Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. With him the first phase of Chishti *silsilah* as a movement for mass spiritual culture in India came to an end.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh occupies a pre-eminent place in the history of Islamic mysticism in South Asia – an erudite scholar with deep insight in religious sciences, a pious saint resigned to the will of God, a mystic teacher with rock-like firmness in his adherence to the basic principles of mystic ideology – he proved himself an ideal successor of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith rightly calls him اشهر و اعظم خلفای شیخ نظام الدین اولیاء رح (the most celebrated and the greatest of the *khalifahs* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya) and Jamali thus pays tribute to his contribution:

تنش آداب ظاهـــــر را ادیبے دلش امراض باطـــن را طبیبے
چراغے مسجد اقصای مقصود نصیر الدین ملت شیخ محمود

(His body (external actions) taught manners of politeness and culture.
His spiritual qualities healed the hidden diseases (of the heart).
He was a lamp which showed the way to the distant destination.
This was Nasir-u'd-din Millat Shaikh Mahmud.)

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din lived in an age of social chaos and intellectual anarchy. He rose up to the occasion and faced the situation with remarkable vision, courage and patience. His spiritual mentor had impressed upon his mind that the way to spiritual goal lay through service of mankind. It integrated one's spiritual personality and set it

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in tune with the Divine Messages. Spiritual rapture may be good, he said, but far better is honest and faithful work in repairing the breaches and building up the waste places of human life. 'Bringing happiness to human heart' earned greater reward on the Day of Judgement than indolent contemplation or brooding over emotions of piety. Reacting to his request to pass his life in some sequestrated corner far away from human habitation, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya advised him to live in human society and face the blows and buffets of people with large-hearted tolerance and return evil with good. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din carried out the instructions of his master with superb sincerity of purpose and dedication. He displayed infinite capacity for taking pains. No trial or tribulation could shake him from his position. In fact his perseverance repaired the Chishti mystic house in the hurricane season. If the historical and mystical trends of the Chishti *silsilah* during its early phase in India cannot be fully appreciated without a reference to his life and activities, neither can the policies of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq be properly understood without taking into consideration the reaction of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. Though his desperate struggle against sin and suffering seemed to proclaim: "After me the deluge!", his decision to get the mystic regalia – which had come down to him from the earlier saints – buried with him shows that he was conscious that with him a phase of mystic activity was coming to an end. He was the last bulwark against the centrifugal and dissolvent forces working in the mystic sphere. The sudden appearance of provincial *khanqahs* in the country after his death gives some idea of the efforts he must have put in to save the organization from dismemberment.

In preparing this biography of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh I have relied mainly on contemporary records – mystic and non-mystic – and have drawn as accurate a picture of the Shaikh as our records permit. Later records have been used with critical caution, separating facts from fiction.

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11 May, 1991

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INTRODUCTORY

(I)
THE SHAIKH

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, popularly known as Chiragh-i-Dehli (ob. 18 Ramazan 757 A.H./14 September 1356), was the last great saint of the first cycle[1] of the Chishti *silsilah* in India. Steeped in the Chishti mystic ideology of more than one hundred years, he kept the torch of his masters burning under conditions which would have broken the spirit of a man of smaller stature and inferior mettle. His elevation to the *sajjadah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya (ob. 1325 A.D.) synchronised with a period of unprecedented social and intellectual crisis in India. There was a mushroom growth of horrid cults and degrading beliefs.[2] The Muslim society had drifted from its old intellectual moorings and religion had become a mere formality[3], cramped by hairsplitting theology and deadened by dogmatic formalism. 'Isami informs us:[4]

ز هر گوشه اهل بدعت بخاست — هم از شرمت شان سعادت بکاست
رها کرده خلقش رسوم قدیم — شده هر کجا بدعتی مستقیم
ز بستار تا کفش نو ساختند — لباسی دگر خلق بر داختند

(Heretic ideas spread in every quarter of Delhi. Consequently, good old habits were given up by the people and vices were persistently practised everywhere. The character of everyone was profoundly affected and it looked as if the people had completely changed like a person putting on a new dress from head to foot.)

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1. The following saints belonged to the first cycle of the Chishti *silsilah* in India: Khwaja Mu'in-u'd-din Chishti of Ajmer (ob. 633/1236), Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki of Delhi (ob. 633/1236), Shaikh Farid-u'd-din Ganj-i-Shaker of Pakpattan (ob. 644/1265), Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya of Delhi (ob. 725/1325) and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh of Delhi.
2. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 7-11.
3. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 82; see also *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 14.
4. *Futuh-u's-Salatin*, p. 454; Eng. tr. p. 386.

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Messianic expectations of a *mahdi* who would come and set things right resulted in breeding inaction and lethargy.[5] The pacificism of the early mystic orders degenerated into passivism; dignified aloofness from the state gave place to an undignified scramble for favours of rulers. Mystic customs and practices lost their spiritual significance and became a license for loose behaviour. "On sacred days large parties of women came out of the city riding in palanquins, chariots and *dolahs*, on horses, and male buffaloes *(sutur)* and numerous big groups of these came out on foot and visited tombs. Libertines and dissolute persons, who are slaves to the desires of flesh and have no scruples, created mischief and rowdiness which was an obvious result of this practice".[6] One needs only glance through the contemporary literature, political and non-political, to gauge the depths to which Muslim society had sunk.[7] Living in this age of moral inertia and spiritual paralysis, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din strove hard by precept and example to improve its moral tone and save it from disintegration. How deep was his distress and despair may be gauged from this couplet which he frequently recited:[8]

مسلماناں مسلماناں ، مسلمانی مسلمانی
ازیں آئین بے دینان پشیمانی پشیمانی

In the page of *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, which records the conversations of the Shaikh, one can detect his concern for his co-religionists and the fire that was consuming him:

A fever in these pages burns,
Beneath the calm they feign.

The age of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was an age of bitter doctrinal differences between the mystics and the jurists, not only in India

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5. When the tide of life begins to ebb in a people they find an easy escape from the hard realities of life in comfortable Messianic theories. For Rukn's claim to be the *Mahdi-i-akhir-uz-zaman*, see *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 8.

6. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 10.

7. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 7-11; also *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, (Ms., Muslim University, Etawah Collection) f76a, 163a-b, 164ab, 165ab.

8. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 82.

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but all over the Muslim world. The externalist scholars, under the influence of Ibn Taimiyya (ob. 728/1328) one of the most outstanding Muslim scholars of the 14th century, had launched a bitter attack against many institutions and practices of medieval mysticism.[9] The mystics stoutly resisted this attempt, but the fact that mysticism itself had degenerated from a movement for the spiritual culture of man into occultism, passivism, grave-worship[10] and saint-worship[11] made their position untenable and weak in the face of an antagonistic movement like that of Ibn Taimiyya. They could stand the opposition of the externalist theologians only if their own house was in order. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din met the challenge of time squarely. He purged and purified those aspects of mystic life which had evoked criticism from the orthodox quarters and made a serious and sincere effort to bridge the gulf between the jurists and the mystics – an unique attempt in the 14th century which gives Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din a pre-eminent position in the history of contemporary religious thought. That a mystic of his calibre should be called *Abu Hanifa Thani*[12] (Abu Hanifa, the second) by his disciples shows the great change that he had brought about in the character of mystics and the spirit of mysticism. In the closing years of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's life the opposition of the jurists to the mystic ideology had assumed threatening proportions and one could not help expecting that the conflict would be much more bitter in the time of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, but we do not come across a single case of conflict between Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and the externalist scholars of the day. Fully alive to the necessity of stopping some of the practices which had brought mysticism into disrepute, he strictly forbade the use of musical instruments *(mazamir)* in audition parties,[13] stopped prostration before the *Shaikh*[14] and declared in most unequivocal terms:

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9. See his *Majmu'a al-Rasa'il al-Kubra,* wherein he has trenchantly criticised popular mysticism.

10. See Ibn Taimiyya, *Ziyarat al-Qabur* (Urdu Trans., Rafiq-i-'Am Press, Lahore, 1347 A.D.)

11. See Ibn Taimiyya, *Al-Wasilah* (Urdu Trans. Karimi Press, Lahore 1344 A.H.)

12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 12, 34.

13. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 42.

14. Ibid, p. 157.

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"The practice of a Shaikh is no proof of legality unless evidence (in support) is cited from the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*".[15]

Thus Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din not only silenced the orthodox opposition to mysticism but also attracted some of the outstanding scholars of the period to the mystic fold.[16] He attempted a rapproachment between the mystics and the jurists at a time when Muslim religious thought was in a welter and intellectual anarchy was the order of the day.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din had to struggle against heavy odds during his stay at the capital. Many of his difficulties were due to the policy of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351). The latter, inspired by his reformist zeal, demanded the mystics of his day to take up government services under him. The expansion of the Empire during the earlier years of his reign had placed a very heavy burden on its administrative organization and Muhammad bin Tughluq who had initiated an era of higher imperialism stood in urgent need of the support and collaboration of the intellectual elite, particularly the *'ulama* and the *sufis*.

Geographical expansion necessitated elaboration of principles and policies through the active cooperation of the educated, honest and conscientious administrative personnel. The Sultan used all possible means to associate the mystics with his programmes. He offered *jagirs* and high government jobs to them. He entered into matrimonial relations with the mystics of Nagaur, and the families of *'ulama*.[17] He persuaded, cajoled, threatened and even punished the recalcitrant to fall in line with his programmes and help him in the implementation of his policies. Under these circumstances, baffling and embarrassing as they were, many mystics gave up their old traditions and yielded to the Sultan. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, however, refused to swim with the current and with a courage born of conviction, resisted all attempts to bind him to the state chariot.

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15. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.

16. See *infra* for eminent *'ulama* among his disciples. See also, *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 65. A *danishmand* (externalist scholar) well-versed in *Hidayah*, *Bazdawi* and *Kashshaf* joins the Shaikh's discipline and the Shaikh explains to him the significance of some mystic practices.

17. See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 353.

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He was subjected to many indignities and was constantly harassed by the government, but he bore these hardships with remarkable patience and demonstrated in his life the mystic principle of *Riza* (submission to the will of God).

The Sultan's attempt to compel the people of Delhi to migrate to Daulatabad and settle there, upset the social equilibrium of Delhi[18] and killed those values and traditions which had held together the social fabric and given stability to Muslim thought and social life in the preceding era. That congenial atmosphere in which the Chishti *silsilah* had grown to its full stature disappeared completely, leaving Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din a stranger in his own home. The 'Alai age and all its blessings – economic prosperity, ideological stability and solidarity in body politic – disappeared leaving behind insecurity and doubt. Under such conditions when the old world was fast disappearing and the new had not yet taken shape, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din must have felt as if:

Wandering between two worlds, one dead
The other powerless to be born.

The introduction of the token currency, the Khurasan and the Qarachil expeditions, enhancement of taxation in the Doab and other similar measures of the Sultan produced grave social and economic consequences. Every section of the Indian population – nobles, maliks, soldiers, *sufis*, *ulama*, peasants and workers felt in one way or the other the impact of his policy. Despair, distrust and despondency consequently spread into the upper classes as well as in the rank and file. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din whose *khanqah* was open to all sorts of people and who was prepared to welcome and attend to the problems of a government servant, a merchant, a sufi, a scholar, a peasant and a soldier could not help being touched by the miseries of these people. The sigh of every distressed heart found an

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18. 'Isami writes:

بفرمود آں گاہ فرماں روا — کہ خلقے بیارند از روستا
دراں شہر فرخندہ شاں جا دہند — بہ اہرمناں جای حورا دہند
بود جفد در مسکن بلبلاں — کند زاغ در جای کبک آشیاں

(Then the Emperor ordered that people from the villages be brought and admitted into that auspicious city; that demons be given the place of houris; that the nightingales be replaced by owls and that the nests of partridges be given away to ravens.) *Futuh-us-Salatin*, text p.453, tr. pp. 684-685.

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echo in his soul. This accounts for a deep sadness that pervades his conversations as embodied in *Khair-u'l-Majalis*. He talks to us calmly no doubt but with an unmistakable touch of sadness. This was the result, as much of the general atmosphere of gloom and pessimism that prevailed in the country as of the personal unhappiness occasioned by the Sultan. Significantly enough, the entire milieu – literary, religious and political – seemed soaked in pessimism and gloom. If on one side Muhammad bin Tughluq sadly confessed "my country has become diseased",[19] poets,[20] scholars, mystics and others struck pessimistic notes. It was in this atmosphere of general frustration and gloom that the Chishti mystics were called upon to meet a situation of baffling dimensions – the propagation of Ibn Taimiyya's ideology by the Sultan. Never before the mystic orders had to confront a more powerful movement. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's response and reaction to the challenge shows his inner strength and courage of convictions. He modified mystic attitudes wherever necessary, combated new forces wherever jeopardizing the basic ideals of the mystic movement.

"Bear the blows and buffets of the people" – was his master's advice to him and he sincerely acted upon it. Living in an age of social and spiritual conflicts, he made his mark on the canvas of medieval Indian history by his sincere and strenuous efforts for the moral and spiritual uplift of the people. If any one sentence neatly epitomises the ideal and the mission of his life it is the favourite sentence of his master: "Bring peace to a tortured heart". Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had taught him to love man as man. This teaching influenced his thought and motivated his actions. His love for humanity was pure, deep, and consuming and it not only inspired and sustained him in the midst of persistent opposition and difficulty, but it was a power that awakened the 'divine' in his soul.

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19. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 521.

20. 'Ubaid wrote: ما کرا شعر و غزل گوئیم چوں در عہد ما
شاهد موزوں و ممدوح زر افشاں نماند

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begun to reset their homes. Muhammad bin Tughluq's favours to foreigners attracted large number of scholars and learned men to this country. The *al-A'yan-u'l-'Asr*, the *al-Durar al-Kaminah*, the *Masalik-u'l-Absar*, the *Subh-u'l-A'sha*, the *Kitab-u'l-Wafi bil Wafayat*, the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun and Maqrizi's *Khatat* show how varied were the cultural contacts between India and other lands during the Tughluq period. Muhammad bin Tughluq's political ken extended upto Egypt on one side and China and Khurasan on the other. Embassies came to his court from different parts of Asia. The Iraq embassy sent by Musa, the Chinese embassy sent by Togan Timur, the Khwarazmi embassy sent by princess Turabak, wife of Qatlu Damur, ruler of Khwarazm, the arrival of Amir Saif-u'd-din, son of the chief of the Arabs of Syria – all these show the extent to which friendly relations had developed with the outside world. Muhammad bin Tughluq appointed a special officer *Hajib-u'l-Ghuraba* – to receive and look after the foreigners. This contact with the outside world made the intellectual achievements of Muslim lands available to India. References to contemporary works in *Fatawa-i-Tatar Khaniyah* show rapid transmission of ideas and effective intellectual links between India and the outside world.

The early Tughluq period saw the cultural life of the country at a very high level. In Delhi alone there were thousand colleges. Of these only one belonged to the Shafi'ites, the rest were of the Hanafites.[22] The Firuzi Madrasah, with its learned Principal, Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Rumi, was a great centre of Muslim learning in the East, and people thronged there from distant parts of the country, simply to have a look at it:

از پئے نظارہ دیدار او شرق و غرب
کارواں در کارواں و قافلہ در قافلہ

(With a view to have a look at it, (people from) the East and the West (come) in caravan after caravan)[23]

There was hardly any conceivable branch of learning in which instruction was not imparted at this institution.[24]

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22. *Subh-ul-A'sha*, English translation by O. Spies, p. 29.

23. *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* (MS). See also Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 564. For a detailed account of the Firuzi Madrasah, see Nizami, *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture*, pp. 73-79.

24. See, *Diwan-i-Mutahhar* (MS).
Barani particularly refers to the teaching of *tafsir, hadis* and *fiqh (Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 564).

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Mutahhar thus speaks of its academic atmosphere :

عالمان عربی لفظ و عراقی دانش
همه در جبهٔ شامی و بمصری دستار
هر یکی نادرهٔ دهر در انواع هنر
هر یکی واسطهٔ عقل در اطراف دیار
صفه (صدر) آن محفل و سر دفتر آن استادی
که ز سر تا بقدم صورت عقل است و وقار
گفتم این عالم آفاق جلال الدین است
رومی آن کز نسبتش ره کنند و روم فخار

25

It was a residential institution and had excellent arrangements for the boarding and lodging of students who flocked to it from different parts of the country.

Many primary schools *(makatib)* were financed by the State. The author of *Masalik-u'l-Absar* writes: "In the *maktabs*, thousands of *faqihs* are appointed whose allowances are paid by the *Diwan*. They teach the orphans and the children of the people *qir'at* (method of reciting the *Qur'an*) and writing."[26]

The Tughluq period was prolific in religious as well as general literature. Scholars like Sadr-u's-Sudur Jalal-u'd-din Kirmani, whom Barani calls 'the Ghazzali of his age'[27], Maulana Shihab-u'd-din Daulatabadi[28], Shaikh Ali Maha'imi,[29] Maulana Ibn Taj Multani[30], Maulana 'Alim bin 'Ala,[31] Maulana Zia-u'd-din Nakhshabi[32] enhanced the cultural glory of the age. Maulana

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25. *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore May 1935 pp. 137-138.

26. *Masalik-u'l-Absar*, English translation by O. Spies, p. 39.

27. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 579

28. For details, Nizami's article in *Ency. of Islam*, new edition, I pp. 180-181. See also, *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, pp. 175-176. Also Firishta, II, p. 595, *Ma'athir-ul-Kiram*, p.189, *Subhat-ul-Marjan*, p.36

29. For details of his works, Nizami, *Supplement to Elliot and Dowson's History of India*, Vol. III, pp. 106-109.

30. For his works, Brockelmann, II, p. 220; Storey, p. 51.

31. *Nuzhat-al-Khwatir*, p. 67.

32. For details, Nizami, 'Zia-u'd-din Nakhshabi', in *Tarikhi Maqalat*, pp. 79-114.

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Shihab-u'd-din was, according to Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq Muhaddith, the most distinguished scholar of his age.[33] His commentary on the *Qur'an, Bahr-i-Mawwaj*, was a monumental work of its kind. Several works on *hadith* appeared during this period. Ibn al-Damamini produced his *Masabih-ul-Jami' fi Sharh-i Sahih al-Bukhari*[34], while Maulana Abu Hafs Siraj-ud-din 'Umar bin Ishaq bin Ahmad al-Daulatabadi[35] wrote his *Tawdih Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*. We find several *hadith* collections being taught at the Firuzi Madrasah.[36]

Besides, profuse literature on *fiqh* and *tasawwuf* appeared during this period. A number of commentaries were written on classical works of Muslim jurisprudence. Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani wrote commentaries on *Talwih, Husami, Kanz al-Daqaiq* and *al-Manar*. Qazi Hamid-u'd-din Dehlawi (ob. 1362) wrote a commentary on *Hidayah*; Syed Yusuf bin Jamal Husaini of Multan (ob. 1388) wrote on *al-Manar*. More than a dozen works were produced by Maulana Abu Hafs Siraj-u'd-din 'Umar (ob.1371) on the various aspects of Muslim jurisprudence. Other important works on *fiqh* produced during this period were *Fawa'id-i-Firuz Shahi, Muqaddimat-u's-Salat, Fiqh-i-Firuz Shahi, Miftah-u'l-Jinan, Fatawa-i-Qara Khani* etc.[37]

The greatest achievement of the period in *fiqh*, was, however, *Fatawa-i-Tatar-Khaniyah* of 'Alim bin 'Ala which threw all other works on jurisprudence into shade. Running into twenty volumes, it is justly considered a monumental work on Muslim jurisprudence.[38]

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33. *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar*, p. 175.
He wrote a book on mystic practices also, known as *Nisbat-u-Khirqa-i-Tasawwuf*, (MSS Berlin 3348).

34. *Contribution of India to Arabic Literature*, p. 252.

35. *Al-Durar al-Kaminah*, (under 'Umar b. Ishaq), *Nuzhat-al-Khwatir*, p. 95; *Supplement to Elliot and Dowson's History of India*, Vol. III, p. 120.

36. *Oriental College Magazine, (Diwan of Mutahhar)* May 1935, p. 137.

37. For details about *fiqh* literature produced during this period and the availability of manuscripts, see Nizami, *Supplement to Elliot and Dowson's History of India*, Vol. III, pp. 117-122.

38. At my suggestion the late Qazi Sajjad Husain, a renowned scholar of Arabic, undertook to edit it (*al-Fatawa-i-Tatar Khaniyah*, Vol. I, pp. 1-2) and brought out five excellently edited volumes. His untimely death unfortunately cut short the work.

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Mystic literature of the period consisted of commentaries on classical works and compilations of the utterances *(malfuzat)* of eminent saints. Ibn 'Arabi, Qushairi and Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi were popular studies and commentaries were written on them. Strangely enough two distinguished disciples of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh adopted diametrically opposed attitude towards the works of Ibn 'Arabi. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz was critical of the great thinker and his mystic approach; Syed Muhammad Ja'far Makki cited him in his *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani* with approbation. Notwithstanding his criticism of Ibn Arabi, Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz had cordial relations with Mas'ud Bak who was deeply influenced by the pantheistic thought of Ibn 'Arabi. This diversity in approaches and attitudes reflects the general atmosphere of the period. Even the role and thought of Khwaja Farid-u'd-din 'Attar, Sanai, Rumi and others was being differently interpreted in Chishti mystic circles.[39]

The exodus of the Chishti saints from Delhi to Deogir as demanded by Muhammad bin Tughluq killed the living tradition of the Chishti *silsilah*, and a desire for preserving the pictures of the past prompted them to compile the utterances of elder saints. Amir Khurd compiled his *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, Shaikh Farid-u'd-din his *Sarur-u's-Sudur*, Hamid Qalandar his *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Maulana Hammad bin 'Imad his *Ahsan-u'l-Aqwal* and Rukn-u'd-din his *Nafais-u'l-Anfas*. Though the practice of compiling *malfuzat* was invented by Amir Hasan Sijzi during the Khalji period, it was now that it became a popular hobby with the mystic-minded people.[40] In fact the way mystic *silsilahs* had been unhinged and their saints had been dispersed intensified in people's mind a desire to preserve their teachings by making collections of their *malfuzat* even on the basis of reports floating down the stream of time. Enormous apocryphal *malfuz* literature thus came into circulation to fill the vacuum created by the migration of the saints to the Deccan and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh had to protest against the genuineness of this literature.[41]

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39. See for instance, *Maktubat* of Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz p. 22; *Haza'ir-u'l-Quds*, pp. 141,157,165, etc. *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, pp. 55,81,97,224 etc.

40. For *malfuz* literature produced during this period, see Nizami, *Supplement to Elliot and Dowson's History of India*, Vol. III, pp. 92-106.

41. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 53.

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Some very successful attempts to translate Sanskrit works into Persian were also made during this period. Maulana 'Abdul Aziz Dihlawi translated a Sanskrit work dealing with eclipses. Another Sanskrit work, found in the Jawalamukhi temple, dealing with natural sciences was translated by 'Aziz-u'd-din Khalid Khani and was named *Dalail-i-Firuz Shahi.*

But this prolific, varied and, at times, brilliant literature should not blind us to its intrinsic worth. Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Delhawi who had critically examined the entire religious literature of the age, very significantly remarks: "After the close of the 'Alai reign, the high standard of wisdom and erudition began to sink to an inferior level and literature assumed quite another complexion, for although Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq appreciated every type of learning, yet there were not as many learned man flourishing in his time as had come together in 'Ala-u'd-din's reign".[42] Indeed the age of giants had passed away, yielding place to men of lesser stature and inferior calibre. The literary output of the period is varied and interesting but not deep and illuminating.

The Tughluq Sultans had great interest in *fiqh*. Muhammad bin Tughluq had commited to memory a good part of the *Hidayah*.[43] Two hundred *faqihs* were always present at his private meals.[44] Firuz Shah discussed many important problems relating to administration with the jurists.

Though the right of *ijtihad* (fresh interpretation of law) had been withdrawn by the *'ulama* long before, definite and clear declarations to that effect were made during this period and no one was permitted to go back to the original sources of law. The *Shari'at* law had ceased to move with the times. Whatever the former Imams had laid down, was now the final word for all time. When Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, in the course of discussion on the legality of *Sama'*, cited a tradition of the Prophet in support of his view-point, the *'ulama* were not satisfied and demanded the verdict of Imam Abu Hanifah.[45]

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42. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, p. 486

43. *Masalik-u'l-Absar*, p. 37.

44. Ibid, p. 33.

45. For details, *Siyar-u'l-Auliya;* p. 525-532.

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Whether it was a reaction against the rigorous enforcement of the juristic principles by the externalist scholars or a natural development, the fact remains that the doctrine of *wahdat-u'l-wujud* (Unity of the noumenal and the phenomenal world), which is essentially a revolt against the rigidity of thought , began to gain ground in South Asia. Ibn Taimiyya was as critical of the pantheistic thought as of the rigidity of jurisitic schools. A part of his religious reform movement – pertaining to juristic schools and *ijtihad* - must have evoked sympathetic response from the Sufis of the Chishti order. It was on this account that Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan found identity of approach between Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya and Ibn Taimiyya.[46]

However Ibn 'Arabi and his *Futuhat-i-Makkiya* and *Fusus-u'l-Hikam,* became popular studies during this period. Mutahhar says:

کتابے زهـر فـــن بنزدیك مـــن نهـــاده چو گنجینهٔ گوهـــری
ز عرفان عوارف و وجدان نصوص ز وعـــظ و نصـــائح کتاب سری

Three important scholars of the period--Syed 'Ali Hamadani, Abul Mahasin Sharaf-u'd-din and Shaikh 'Ali Piru Maha'imi – wrote commentaries on the *Fusus-u'l-Hikam.* While the first two had concentrated on elucidation of Ibn 'Arabi's ideas, Shaikh Maha'imi sought to reconcile his ideas with the approach of the externalist scholars.[47]

While the Muslim society has tolerated the enunciation of *wujudi* doctrines on purely intellectual level, it has never accepted the formation of any culture-group, based on that ideology. Ahmad Bihari's movement[48] was strongly condemned by Firuz Shah because the movement, had it been allowed to develop, would have threatened the very existence of the Muslim culture-group. When Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi took up cudgels against *wahdat-ul-wujud* he had in his mind the social implications of the doctrine. Strange was the situation at this time: the mystic institutions were cracking but mystic ideas which had hitherto remained confined to the selected few, had now reached the masses and influenced their

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46. *Tiqsar Juyud al-Ahrar min Tizkar Junud al Abrar*, Bhopal 1878, p. 136.

47. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 174.

48. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 6.

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thought and activities. Zia-u'd-din Nakhshabi protested:[49]

رموز عشق را بیان کردن حرام است

(It is not permitted to discuss the secrets of cosmic emotion).

But the works of mystics, like Mas'ud Bak[50], came to be widely read. It was to check this trend that Firuz Shah got him executed.

Looking at the intellectual scene in a wider perspective, there was hardly any sphere of religious life where heretical trends were not clearly visible. Firuz Shah's *Futuhat* provides a glimpse into the state of intellectual anarchy that prevailed at this time. If there were *Ibahatis* on one side who considered illegal practices – even incests permitted, there were groups which indulged in reviling the Pious Caliphs and even declared the *Qur'an* as *Mulhiqat-i-'Usmani.* The account of heretical groups as given in *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*[51], conversations of Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari, gives some idea of the anarchy in religious thought. The *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* also refers to heretical sects and groups. If the accounts of heretical groups as given in *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi, Siraj-u'l-Hidayah,* and *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi,* are read together, one is surprised at the extent of departure from the earlier moorings of thought.[52]

The two main *silsilahs* of the early Sultanate period – the Chishtiyya and the Suhrawardiyya – began to disintegrate in the 14th century. The policy of Muhammad bin Tughluq was to a large extent responsible for the dissolution of these orders. The principle of the Chishti saints was: "No *shughl;* whatever the consequences."[53] The Sultan forced them to join state – service and work according to his instructions. A conflict between senior Chishti saints and the Sultan paralysed the organization of the *silsilah.*[54] The disciples of

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49. *Silk-u's-Suluk,* p. 46.

50. His prose work *Mir'at-u'l-'Arifin* and collection of poems, *Nur-u'l-'Ayn,* are soaked in the ideology of Ibn 'Arabi.

51. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah,* MS. Etawah Collection.

52. See Nizami, *Salatin Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat,* pp. 423-426.

53. For details, Nizami's article: 'Early Indo-Muslim Saints and their attitude towards the State', *Islamic Culture,* Oct. 1948 - Jan. 1950.

54. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim,* p. 143.

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Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya were dispersed and the living tradition of the *silsilah* was relegated to the background. The extent of the desolation of Delhi, the nerve centre of the Chishtis, may be estimated from the following statement of Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz:[55]

> در دهلی بسیار زیارت گاه بود ـ بعد خرابی دهلی که سلطان محمد تغلق کرده، آن زیارتها بکلی مضمحل شد ـ جز زیارت شیخ الاسلام قطب الدین و خدمت شیخ الاسلام نظام الدین و چند پیرے که در پس نمازگاه دیگر هیچ زیارت گاهے بکلی نماند

The Suhrawardi *silsilah* suffered a set-back because it subordinated itself completely to the policy of the Tughluq Sultan. When the saints sought state intercession in succession struggles, the religious prestige of the *silsilah* began to decline.[56] The dissolution of the central structures of these *silsilahs* brought the first phase of Muslim mystic activity in India to a close.

As if to remove the cobwebs of superstition from the Muslim mind and counter the influence of pantheistic doctrines, the influence of Imam Ibn Taimiyah also reached the sub-continent through his disciple Maulana 'Abdul 'Aziz Ardbaili whom Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq received with great respect.

The process of cultural synthesis which had started almost simultaneously with the settlement of the Mussalmans in the subcontinent reached a fairly advanced stage during the Tughluq period. The author of the *Masalik-u'l-Absar* informs us that the people of Delhi were eloquent in Persian a well as Hindi languages.[57] Scholars were generally familiar with three languages – Arabic, Persian and Hindawi.[58] The contact of the Sufis with the Hindu population paved way for the evolution of a common *lingua franca – Hindavi* or *Urdu* as it later came to be known. Muhammad

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55. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 143.

56. See, Nizami, 'The Suhrawardi Silsilah and its attitude towards the State', *Medieval India Quarterly*, Vol. III, No. S. and 2, July - October 1957.

57. *Masalik-ul-Absar*, p. 60.

58. *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, p. 192.

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bin Tughluq's contact with the Hindu thinkers and Jain philosophers accelerated this process. Pantheistic ideas served as an ideological prop to such activities. The rise of the Bhakti movement in the following decades was due to the cross-fertilization of ideas provided during this period. The treatment meted out to Nawahun, *darogah* of Uchch, shows the indefensible attitude of bigotted sections to check the development of these trends.[59] The centuries that followed threw all these trends of the age into a cauldron to be cast anew in consonance with the needs of the Muslim society. Heretical trends were controlled, new syncretic forces were released, adjustments and modifications were made in mystical thought and a new world – with a new vision of religion and society – came into being. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud saw the old world collapse; the new world came into being after him. He transmitted the values of the earlier age to the generations that followed.

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59. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, pp. 159-160.

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(III)
THE SOURCES

Though not as prolific as that of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, we have some valuable source material for reconstructing the life and thought of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh of Dehli. His circle of disciples included some eminent scholars of the age who have left some interesting pieces of information about him. The Shaikh himself did not write any book[60] but his conversations (*Khair-u'l-Majalis*), compiled by Hamid Qalandar[61] throw considerable light on his life and activities. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din supervised Qalandar's work regularly. On completing one *juz* (fasciculus) Hamid showed it to the Shaikh who read it and approved it.[62] Hamid had hardly completed seven *juz* that the Shaikh again asked him about the progress he had made in compiling the conversations. The Shaikh did not want the work to degenerate into a book of miracles or of adulations. "Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din", writes Hamid, "has so broken his *nafs* (ego) that if I call him a Shaikh, he resents it; if I attribute a mircale to him he gets angry."[63]

It appears that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was very stiff in this matter. He did not want people to prepare inaccurate or exaggerated records of his conversations. He stopped a disciple from attempting a compilation of his utterances.[64] Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz in-

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60. See Appendix C for critical examination of brochures and works attributed to him.

61. Edited by K.A.Nizami, published by the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University 1959. Since Prof. M. Habib had made extensive use of *Khair-u'l-Majalis* in his article on Shaikh Nasir u'd-din Chiragh (Islamic Culture, April 1349), I requested him to edit the work. He insisted that I should do it and wrote to me: "Years ago I brought you here with hopes ... hope that you will ease me for my own frustrated life. If I took up the edition of *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, I would not be able to finish the work. But this is not the main reason. It would delight my heart to have the work done by you. It was the late Professor Habib whose wishes I carried out in editing this work.

62. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 48

63. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 180

64. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 184

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forms us:

> 'Maulana Kamal-u'd-din, nephew of the Shaikh (Nasir-u'd-din) once presented before the Shaikh two *juz* of a *malfuz* prepared by Hamid Qalandar. The Shaikh glanced through them and remarked: 'I have said a different thing and Maulana Hamid-u'd-din has recorded a different thing'. So saying he threw away (the *malfuz)*. Maulana Kamal-u'd-din submitted: "A *malfuz* has survived as the memory of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din. There should be one such (*malfuz*) of the Khwaja also." "What can I do? I have no time to correct this."[65]

Some such thing could have happened in the earlier stages of compilation but it is certain that the Shaikh ultimately undertook to supervise this work and made it as accurate a record of his conversations as possible.

Next to *Fawa'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, the *Khair-u'l-Majalis* is the most authentic record of the teachings of a Chishti saint. While the *Fawa'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, introduces us to the teachings of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, the *Khair-u'l-Majalis* introduces the person of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh to us. The gloomy atmosphere of the age is reflected in the conversations recorded. Like Hasan Sijzi, Hamid Qalandar was also a poet, though of a lesser stature, as Shaikh Abdul Haqq has pointed out.[66] His *diwan* (collection of poems) has been lost but some of his compositions are found in a *bayaz*[67] available in the British Museum.[68] Some of his *qasidahs* are in praise of Firuz Shah Tughluq, a fact which shows that despite his association with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh and his *qalandar* background he sought royal favours. May be that these *qasidahs* were written after the death of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. It appears from his *qasidahs* that he had personal knowledge of southern cities, particularly Daulatabad.

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65. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 135.

66. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 109.

67. For an account of the *bayaz*, Prof. Nazir Ahmad's article in *Fikr-O-Nazar*, April 1965.

68. Rieu, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Persian MSS in the British Museum*, p. 232.

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The author of *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*[69] knew Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud personally and intimately. He has supplied interesting details about his life in Delhi – particularly in the *Jama'at Khanah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Some of the conversations and discussions of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din as reported by Mir Khurd are very illuminating and help us in assessing the nature and dimension of his mystical thought. The *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*[70], conversations of Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz of Gulbarga, contains very valuable reference to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. In Gisu Daraz's other works, like *Haza'ir-u'l-Quds,*[71] *Asmar-u'l-Asrar*[72], *Sharh Fiqh al-Akbar*[73], *Maktubat*[74], there are some very interesting references to the thought and practices of his spiritual mentor.

Many important scholars of the age, like Maulana Khwajgi, Maulana Ja'far Makki, Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir, were among the disciples of the Shaikh and their works also contain some references to his life and teachings. The *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*[75] of Maulana Ja'far Makki throws light on the Shaikh's strained relations with Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq. The conversations of Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari – *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*[76] and *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*[77] – contain interesting references to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. Yusuf Gada's *Tuhfat-u'l-Nasa'ih*[78], and Mutahhar's *qasidahs*[79] contain eloquent references to the Shaikh. Even Mas'ud Bak, who was executed for his heretical views by Firuz Shah Tughluq, praised the Shaikh's

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69. Muhibb-i Hind Press, Delhi 1302 A.H.

70. Edited by M. Hamid Siddiqi and printed by the Intizami Press, Kanpur 1356/1937.

71. Edited by S. 'Ata Husain, Intizami Press, Hyderabad 1359 A.H.

72. Edited by S. 'Ata Husain, Azam Steam Press, Hyderabad 1350 A.H.

73. Edited by S. 'Ata Husain, Hyderabad 1367 A.H.

74. Edited by S. 'Ata Husain, Hyderabad, 1362 A.H.

75. Lithographed at the Ahtashamiya Press, Moradabad 1889.

76. Edited by Qazi Sajjad Husain, Delhi 1983. MS in personal collection.

77. Edited by Qazi Sajjad Husain, Delhi 1987.

78. Matba'-i-Nur, Lahore, 1283 A.H.

79. *Oriental College Magazine*, May-August 1935. *Ma'arif*, July 1935, pp. 40-60, May pp 107-160, August 161-216, August pp 123-138.

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spiritual excellence. Muhammad 'Ali Samani[80] who compiled an account of Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz in 831/1418, has also supplied interesting details about Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh's ways as a mystic teacher. Contemparary historical works like the *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*[81] of Zia-u'd-din Barani and the *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* of Shams-i-Siraj 'Afif[82] and later historical works like *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*[83] of Yahya Sirhindi, the *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*[84] of Bihamid Khani refer to him particularly in connection with the accession of Firuz Shah Tughluq.

Jamali gives a fairly detailed account of the Shaikh in his *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*[85]. Later *tazkirah* writers have drawn their material mainly from Jamali. Of the later works the *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*[86] of Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawi is based on careful study of contemporary works. *Gulzar-i-Abrar* of Muhammad Ghawthi Shattari contains a brief but accurate account of the Shaikh. The following later *tazkirahs* contain biographical notices of the Shaikh, based mainly on Mir Khurd and Jamali:

i. *Akhbar-u'l-Asfiya*[87] by 'Abdus Samad, a nephew of Abul Fazl, completed in 1014 A.H./1605-6 A.D.
ii. *Mir'at-u'l-Asrar*[88] by 'Abdur Rahman Chishti, completed in 1065 A.H./1654 A.D.
iii. *Majma'-u'l-Auliya*[89] by Mir 'Ali Akbar Husaini Ardistani, compiled in 1043 A.H./1633-34 A.D.

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80. *Siyar-i-Muhammadi*, edited with Urdu translation by Shah Nazir Ahmad, Gulbarga 1979.

81. Edited by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, As. Soc. of Bengal, Calcutta 1860.

82. Edited by Vilayat Husain, As. Soc. of Bengal, Calcutta 1891.

83. As. Soc. of Bengal, Calcutta 1931.

84. Ms. British Museum.

85. Lithographed Rizwi Press, Delhi 1311 A.H.

86. Lithographed Mujtaba'i Press, Delhi 1309 A.H.

87. MSS., I.O. and Bankipur.

88. MS. in personal Collection.

89. MS. I.O.

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iv. *Safinat-u'l-Auliya*[90] by Dara Shukoh, completed in 1049 A.H./1640 A.D.
v. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*[91] by Ghulam Mu'in-u'd-din 'Abdullah Khweshgi, completed in 1094 A.H./1682 A.D.
vi. *Matlub-u'l-Talibin*[92] by Muhammad Bulaq Chishti, compiled in 1111 A.H./1699 A.D.
vii. *Rauzah-i-Aqtab*[93] by Muhammad Bulaq Chishti.
viii. *Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar*[94] by Muhammad Akram Baraswi completed in 1142 A.H./1729 A.D.
ix. *Shajrat-u'l-Anwar*[95] by Rahim Bakhsh Fakhri.
x. *Khazinat-u'l-Asfiya*[96] by Ghulam Sarwar Lahori.
xi. *Anwar-u'l-'Arifin*[97] by Hafiz Muhammad Husain Moradabadi.
xii. *Manaqib-u'l-Mahbubin*[98] by Maulana Najm-u'd-din.

Besides, there are some general mystical works, like *Lata'if-i-Ashrafi*,[99] and *Saba' Sanabil*[100] which contain references to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh.

All this literature has been taken into consideration while preparing this biography of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.

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90. Lithographed Newal Kishore, Kanpur 1900.
91. MS. in Personal collection.
92. MS. in Personal collection.
93. Lithographed Muhibb-i-Hind Press, Delhi 1887.
94. Lithographed Lahore 1895.
95. MS. in Personal collection.
96. Lithographed Samar-i-Hind Press, Lucknow 1873.
97. Lithographed Nawal Kishore, Lucknow 1876.
98. Lithographed Samar-i-Hind Press, Lucknow 1875.
99. Lithographed Nusrat al-Mataba', Delhi 1295 A.H.
100. Lithographed Nizami Press, Kanpur 1299 A.H.

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Chapter I

BIRTH AND EDUCATION

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud was born in Awadh,[1] earlier known as Ajodhaya and renowned as a centre of Hindu culture. Muslim legend looked upon it as the burial place of two Prophets – Shith and Ayyub.[2] No contemporary or later writer has mentioned the date of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's birth. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz however, informs us that he died at the age of 82.[3] Calculated on this basis his date of birth should be *circa* 675 A.H./1276-77. His father, Shaikh Yusuf[4] traded in wool *(pashmina)*.[5] He had a large number of slaves and led a comfortable life according to the medieval standards. His family originally belonged to Khurasan from where his grandfather, 'Abdul Latif Yezdi, migrated to Lahore, probably under the pressure of Mongol invasions. Shaikh Yusuf was born in Lahore. Later in life he moved to Awadh and settled there.

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1. How ignorant translators have played havoc with his biographical data may be gauged from the translation of the following lines about the Shaikh given in *A'in-i-Akbari:*

شیخ نصیرالدین چراغ دهلی، نام محمود ، زادگاه او ده مرید و خلیفه شیخ نظام الدین اولیاء است، هژدهم رمضان هفت صد و پنجاه و هفت ازیں جهان گزاشتنی در گزشت.

(Sir Syed Edition II, p. 210).

Jarrett's translation (corrected and further annotated by Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, Vol. III p. 409, Delhi 1989) runs as follows:

"His name was Mahmud and his birthplace Delhi. He was the disciple and vicegerent of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. He departed from this world that all must leave on the Ist of Ramazan, A.H. 757 (2nd Sept. 1356)".

2. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, p. 72.

3. *Sharh Fiqh-i-Akbar*, p. 45; *Ferishta* II p. 329.

4. See Appendix - A.

5. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238, *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 80.
Chengiz Khan devastated the whole region in 1220. See C. Huart's article on 'Khorasan', in the *Ency. of Islam*, II, pp. 966-967.

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According to Muhammad Bulaq Chishti he was a Syed, being a direct descendant of Imam Husain.[6]

Shaikh Yusuf died when his son, Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, was only nine years old.[7] His mother, a pious and talented lady, looked after his education,[8] and in fact, whatever academic eminence he attained in his life was due to the supervision of his mother in his early years.

TEACHERS

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's first teacher was Maulana 'Abdul Karim Sherwani,[9] a scholar of established reputation in his day. According to the *Supplement*[10] he taught *Hidaya*[11] and *Bazdawi*[12] to him, but the Shaikh himself one day informed his audience that he had studied *Bazdawi* with Qazi Muhi-u'd-din Kashani.[13] The Shaikh told his disciples that Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi and his brother Kamalu-u'l-din were his class mates.[14] The Shaikh's knowledge of *fiqh*, as is evident from his conversations, was excel-

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6. *Matlub-u'l-Talibin*, MS f. 118a; *Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar*, p. 179; *Shajrat-u'l-Anwar*, MS. *Khazinat-u'l-Asfiya*, (I,p. 353) has however, traced his pedigree to Imam Hasan. These are all later accounts and there is no earlier authority to confirm them.

7. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 282.

8. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p. 92; *Mir'at-u'l-Asrar*, MS, p. 632; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, I, p. 121.

9. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 282; *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p. 92; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS, I, p. 121.

10. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 282.

11. An encyclopaedia of Muslim theology and law by Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Marghinani (ob. 593/1197), published from Cairo in 1326 A.H.

12. A well-known work on the principles of Islamic Law by Ali b. Muhammad al-Bazdawi, an eminent jurist of Hanafi School (ob. 482/1089).

13. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 150. Qazi Muhi-u'd-din Kashani was an eminent disciple and *Khalifah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. He was one of the most distinguished scholars of the 'Alai period (Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 353). For brief notices, see *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 294-296; *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 97-98; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, I, pp. 322-323.

14. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 63.

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lent and this must have been due to his very thorough coaching in the subject during his early years.

On Maulana Sherwani's death Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din joined the discourses of Maulana Iftikhar-u'd-din Muhammad Gilani[15] at whose feet he completed his education of external sciences *'ulum-i-zahiri).*

Another eminent teacher of the Shaikh was Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya[16]. The Shaikh is reported to have composed the following Arabic couplet about him:

سالت العلم من احياك حقا
فقال العلم شمس الدين يحيى

I asked knowledge: "Who has revived thee?"
Knowledge replied: "Shams-u'd-din Yahya."[17]

Mir Khurd informs us that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud always showed deep respect to him.

تا آخر عمر بعد هر چندگاه بخدمت مولانا شمس الدين
میرفت و رعایت حقوق ما تقدم بر طریقِ سلف می کرد

(Till the end of his life whenever he went to see Maulana Shams-u'd-din he showed to him the same reverence which was the tradition of the elders.)

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15. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 282; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, I,p. 121. Two scholars of the name of Iftikhar-u'd-din are mentioned by Barani in his list of the forty six outstanding scholars of the 'Alai period *(Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 353-4), but one of them was Barani, the other was Razi.

16. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 225; *Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram*, p. 182; *Subhat al-marjan fi athar-i Hindustan*, p. 29. Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya was an eminent scholar of his age (Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 353). He was an elder *Khalifah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar* pp. 96-97; *Mir'at-u'l-Asrar*, MS.

17. There is a pun upon the word *Yahya* which if read *Yuhya* means revives. See also *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 97.

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It is not, however, clear if he received this instruction from Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya in Awadh or in Delhi. It appears from *Siyar-u'l-Auliya* that he had received some education in Delhi also. Here he lived in the city with Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Gharib. Both of them were on intimate terms of friendship. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud sometimes led his congregational prayers also.[18] One day Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya enquired from him about his residence in Delhi and on being informed that he lived with Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Gharib remarked: "Be a genuine man, live wherever you like."[19]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud committed the *Qur'an* to memory at the age of twelve.[20] The mosque where he received his instruction in the *Qur'an* had a tree on which a raven sat cawing all the time. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's spiritual anxieties made him interpret the cries of the crow.[21]

During this period he also completed the study of *Panj Ganj*[22] and *Hariri*.[23] While he was himself receiving education, he used to teach the sons of his maternal uncle, Khwaja Khizr, who was a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya[24]. It was perhaps under his influence that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din later went to Delhi and joined the discipline of the Shaikh. At one stage in his life he had thought of associating himself with the discipline of Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din Multani, but gave up the idea later.

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18. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 279.

19. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 279.

20. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 71.

21. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 71.

22. A book on Grammar-Etymology. It continued to be prescribed in the syllabus throughout the medieval period. It was included in the *Dars-i-Nizami* also. (*Al-Minhaj* p. 73).

23. The *Maqamat-i-Hariri*, the chief text book of the time, is esteemed as a great literary treasure in the Arabic language. Its author Abu Muhammad al-Qasim b. Ali b. Muhammad b. Uthman al-Hariri of Basra (ob.1122 A.D.) was a renowned scholar of his day. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya remembered by heart the entire text of *Hariri*.

24. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 71.

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While in Awadh, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud fasted continuously. His mother, who was worried about his health, insisted on his taking some food at the time of *iftar* (breaking the fast). Days would pass but he would not take anything. After some six or seven days he took some rice and drank little water simply to please his mother. Every day at *iftar* time he promised to take some food at *sahri* (before dawn when fast begins), but that morning never came. His mother prepared three loaves of bread with purified butter and sugar and sent it to him through her old maid servant, Khalli. Khalli had come in her dowry and could act as an appointed guardian. But he never listened to her persuasions and gave a piece of bread to her as bribe and got rid of her. The remaining two loaves of bread he gave to some *dervish*[25] in the morning and himself ate nothing.

At the early age of twelve Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din developed the habit of keeping awake most of the night. When sleep overpowered him, he put some powdered pepper in his eyes and became wide awake again to continue his prayers.[26] It is difficult to trace the sources of his mystic inspiration in the external experiences of his early life. There was something innate and inherent in his emotional life which drew him to prayers, penitences and self-mortification.

Sometime in the closing years of his life he gave the following account of his prayers and penitences in Awadh:

> "There were pleasant mausoleums (*haza'ir*) and mango-groves (in Awadh). Both the mausoleums and the mango-groves have disappeared now. I used to go out every morning after prayers along with Khwaja Mahmud, father of (my) nephews, Mu'in-u'd-din and Maulana Kamal-u'd-din, reciting my *wird*[27] on the way. On reaching the mausoleums I would apologize and say to him: 'Khwaja! You can go home or (if you like) pray in one of the mausoleums like me and busy yourself (in prayers)'. He would do likewise. (We) said our *zuhr* (midday) prayer there.

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25. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 159.

26. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 316.

27. Recitals and incantations which one makes obligatory on himself to recite daily.

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At 'asr time I gave the call to prayers: about ten or twelve persons collected together and I led the congregational prayer. Sometimes I would offer *maghrib* (evening) and *'Isha* (night) prayers there. At night I would come back home, reciting the *wird*. Sometimes I would get a short after-noon nap *(qailulah)* under the nets between the tree-trunks; there was no fear of a beast or a thief who would steel my water-pot or my shoes. On reaching home at night I would retire to my room on the roof and spend the whole night in religious devotions. Years passed like this".[28]

Tears trickled down the Shaikh's sleep-laden eyes as he recounted his early spiritual experiences to his audience.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din struggled hard in his early years to control the calls of flesh in him. He reduced his diet to almost the starvation point and whenever sex-desire troubled him he said to himself: "Death is preferable to a life of sex-desire" and drank so much lemon-juice that he brought himself to the verge of death.[29]

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28. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 170-171.

29. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 24; *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.

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Chapter II

IN THE KHANQAH OF SHAIKH NIZAM-U'D-DIN AULIYA

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud reached Delhi during the time of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji (1296-1316). As he recalled later in life, it was the time of peace, prosperity and plenty:

> "What a cheapness it was in those days. During the winter days there was no mendicant without a quilt, some of them had more ....."[1]

He talked about *langars* which distributed free food in Delhi, small and manageable expenditure on marriages, nominal cost of preparing a quilt etc. with nostalgic memories.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din had looked after the culture of his soul simultaneously with his education in external sciences. The need of a spiritual guide brought him to Delhi. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and had passed his early years in extremely affluent circumstances but his soul yearned for direct spiritual experiences. Neither the plenty of his home nor the gay atmosphere of Awadh could deflect him from the path he had chosen for himself. For years he wandered in the jungles of Awadh, praying and fasting. Very often he broke his fast with the leaves of *sambhalu*.[2]

It was at the age of forty three[3] that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din felt seriously the need of a spiritual guide under whose supervision the untraversed part of his mystic journey could be completed. He had done all that was possible through individual effort; an expert was needed now to lead him on. It was probably the fame of Shaikh

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1. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 240.

2. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 282. According to Unani Pharmacopoeia the leaves of *sambhalu* reduce sex.

3. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 282, *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p. 92, *Mir'at-u'l-Asrar* (MS).

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Nizam-u'd-din Auliya and his popularity in Awadh[4] which drew him to Delhi. His maternal uncle Khwaja Khizr was already a disciple of the Shaikh.

I can not do better than reproduce here the graphic account of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's interview with Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya as given by Professor Muhammad Habib:[5]

"It was a little before noon on a hot summer day in Delhi in the early years of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji's reign that Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, the greatest Indo-Muslim saint of all times, left his comfortless room on the upper storey, which was burning like an oven, negotiated the clumsy and dangerous staircase,[6] and was about to proceed to a little room that adjoined his *Jama'at Khana,*[7] a large hall with tall clumsy pillars in which his disciples lived, prayed and slept according to the principles prescribed for the community life of the mystics. But the great Shaikh, who kept his nights alive with prayers, meditations and recitations of select verses,[8] was not destined to enjoy his much-needed mid-day rest. For, casting his eyes around him, he discerned a man of about forty-five or so standing in the courtyard under the banyan tree,[9] which some years later was to spread its branches over the roof of the *Jama'at Khana,* so that the Shaikh and his friends might sit comfortably in the shade. Something in the man, one of his newer disciples attracted the great Shaikh, for he possessed in a remarkable degree the intuitive intelligence *(nafs-i-gira)*, of the mystics. The new disciple had come to his master, even as Shaikh Baha-u'd-din

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4. Many of the eminent disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya were drawn from Awadh, once a great centre of Hindu culture. Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya, Maulana 'Ala-u'd-din Nili, Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Shirazi, Khwaja Latif-u'd-din Khandsali, Maulana Qiwam-u'd-din Yakdana, Maulana Mubarak Gopamavi and Maulana Jamal-u'd-din belonged to Awadh.

5. *Islamic Culture*, April 1946 pp. 129-131. References to original sources in foot-notes are mine. It is, however, not certain whether this was the first interview with the Shaikh or it took place after his initiation.

6. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238.

7. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238.

8. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 126-127.

9. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238.

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Zakariya had gone to Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din 'Umar .... after years of study, preparation and self-training. He was, to quote a metaphor of the Great Shaikh himself, like 'dry wood'[10] which the mystic-master had to breathe on and it would burst into flames.

"The Great Shaikh gave up the idea of his mid-day rest, turned to the gate-room *(dilhiz)*[11] and sent one of the servants[12] of the Khanqah to summon the new disciple.

"Sit down", said the Great Shaikh, surveying the man with those red, sleep-laden eyes of his, well aware that even his Khanqah was fortunate in the advent of such a mystic. "What is in your heart? What is your aim? What work did your father do"?[13]

The new disciple was prepared for all that human mind and frame can bear in the search for *Haq* or the Absolute. He had already cast aside all earthly ties, though he belonged to a well-to-do family.

"My father", Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud replied, "had slaves who traded in woolen cloth. The object of my devotions is to pray for the long life of the Shaikh, to attend to the shoes of the *durweshes*, and to serve them with my head and eye-balls."

"The Great Shaikh's mind inevitably went back to those far-off days when, though the most distinguished of Delhi students and one whom every one expected to have a fine career, he had almost without an effort, cast all worldly temptations aside and presented himself at the Jama'at Khana of Shaikh Farid-u'd-din of Ajodhan, determined to tread the mystic path. He possessed nothing, absolutely nothing, in those days. A kindly lady had lent her *chadar* to wind round his waist while she washed his only pair of garments.[14] He had not even a copper coin to buy a little paper in which to jot down his master's instructions.

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10. *Fawa'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, p. 43.

11. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238.

12. The name of the servant was Khwaja Nasir.

13. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238.

14. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 115.

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"Here, the Great Shaikh could not fail to see, was a true successor to him, to Shaikh Farid-u'd-din and to all the great Chishti saints of the past.

"Bravo! Now hear me", the Great Shaikh said, "When after finishing my studies I went to Shaikh Farid at Ajodhan, a friend and class-fellow of mine, with whom I used to have academic discussions (at Delhi), came and put up at inn. He had a servant to attend to his needs. Seeing me in my grimy and tattered clothes, he exclaimed: "Maulana Nizam-u'd-din! What misfortune has befallen you? Had you taken to teaching work at Delhi, you would have become the leading scholar *(mujtahid)* of the time with prosperity and sufficient livelihood. I said nothing in justification but merely apologized and returned to Shaikh Farid. "What would be your answer to such a question?" Shaikh Farid asked. "As the Shaikh directs", I replied, "Tell him", Shaikh Farid replied:

نه همرهی تو مرا، راه خویش گیر برو
ترا سعادت باداء مـــرا نگـــون ســـاری

(You are not my travelling companion,
Seek your own path, get along.

May prosperity be your portion in life
and misfortune mine).

He then asked me to order a tray of every variety of dishes from his kitchen and to take it on my head to my friend who, genuinely surprised, came to see Shaikh Farid-u'd-din and was so charmed by his conversation that he entered the circle of his disciples.[15] ..... Tears flowed down the Shaikh's cheeks[16] as in that small Looh-swept room he expounded the principles of mysticism to the new disciple, who on his part, took in every thing and understood everything.

"This is how, woven round a simple story and a plain verse, the last of the great Chishti mystics received the spiritual benedictions of his master".

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15. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 239-240.

16. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 240. آب دیده چون جوی آب می ریخت

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AT THE FEET OF SHAIKH NIZAM-U'D-DIN AULIYA

"The Sultan-u'l-Mashaikh (i.e. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din-Auliya)", writes Mir Khurd, "who possessed perfect wisdom and great intuitive intelligence instructed every disciple to devote himself to the work he was capable of. (If) he ordered one to close his lips and his gates, he instructed the other to strive in increasing the (number of) disciples. To a third one he ordered to live with the people, bear their blows and buffets and deal politely and honestly with them."[17] When Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din reached Delhi and joined the discipline of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din the ascetic element was very powerful in his personality. Years of vigils, fasts and penitences in the lonely jungles of Awadh had made him deeply introspective and seclusion-loving. Compelled by the inner urge of his soul he requested Amir Khusrau, who had the courage to broach any subject before the Great Shaikh, to intercede on his behalf and secure his permission for retiring from society and passing his life in mystic contemplation in some lonely hill-tract or desert. When Amir Khusrau placed his friend's request before the Great Shaikh, he replied: "Tell him (Nasir-u'd-din), he should live with the people and bear their blows and buffets (patiently) and return them by generosity and magnanimity."[18] Thus the Great Shaikh gave a new orientation to his thought by emphasizing the value of social service in the spiritual development of man. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din had learnt to be "busy in God", Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya taught him" to show people the way to God."[19] One day the Shaikh addressed him thus: "Offering many (genuflexions of) prayers, reciting many *aurad*, and keeping many fasts and reciting the *Qur'an* are things which even an old lady can do. She can fast (in the day) and pray at night and recite a few parts of the *Qur'an*. But the mission of the people of God is (entirely) different. It is three fold: first, the idea of eating or clothing should not cross his heart. A *durwesh* in whose heart the idea of eating or clothing passes, cannot reach his goal. Secondly, be busy with God both in public and in private. This is the secret of all

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17. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 238; *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 80.

18. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 237, see also *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 46.

19. The two-fold function of a mystic, according to Shah Kalimullah of Delhi was "to be busy in God and in showing people the way to God". *Maktubat-i-Kalimi*, p. 35.

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penitences and devotions. Thirdly, do not talk to anybody with the intention of captivating his heart. If you advise or sermonize there should be no purpose behind it and affectation or hypocrisy should not touch it. It should be (actuated) by sincerity, pure and simple".[20]

The Great Shaikh no doubt checked the growth of ascetic tendencies in Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and he fully carried out the instructions of his master, but his soul always longed for "loneliness". One day he said about his early life:[21]

سالها ایں تمنا داشتم که میزری درته بندم و عرقچی در بر،
و طاقیه بر سر، کوهی و بیابانی و مسجدی بگیرم

(For years my desire was to put an apron round the loins, a jacket on the breast and a cap on the head and pass time in some mosque in hills and in wilderness.)

In his old age, when he was fast approaching his end, he told Hamid Qalandar with tears flowing from his eyes:

"Had it not been the Shaikh's order that (I) should stay in the city and bear the blows and buffets of the people, you and I would never have come together. I would have been in wilderness, in mountains and in deserts."[22]

Though retiring and introvert by nature, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din soon endeared himself to the inner circle of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's disciples by his calm and unobstrusive ways. Whenever he came from Awadh he was cordially received and entertained by senior persons like Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Gharib, Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan.

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20. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 450. The same statement was made by the great Shaikh before Maulana Hussam-u'd-din, see *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 68-69.

21. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 170.

22. Ibid., p. 46. He pathetically recited the following verses which reveal the inner yearning of his soul:

دشت و کهسار گیر همچو وحوش خانماں گو بمـان بگربـه و موش
در عشق چه جای خانه داری است مجنون شو و کوه گیر و بخروش

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According to Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz, whenever Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud came from Awadh, he remained confined to the *khanqah* for three days. Then with the Shaikh's permission he went out to the mausoleum of Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki and visited some friends also who were always eager to have him in their audition parties.[23] Gradually his fame spread to the wider circle of the Shaikh's disciples and large number of admirers from the city approached the Shaikh for his permission to invite him to feasts. The Great Shaikh always gave his consent to these invitations and conveyed his permission to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din through Iqbal, his personal attendant. The city being at a distance from the *khanqah* of the Shaikh, these feasts meant considerable waste of time for Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din. On one occasion he could not see his Shaikh for nine days due to continuous feasts and entertainments in the city. He humbly submitted to his master one day: "My humble self comes from Awadh with the desire to spend some time at the feet of the Khwaja and see him everyday – not to attend feasts." The Great Shaikh appreciated his feelings and from that time onwards rejected all invitations from the city.[24]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din did not sever his relations with Awadh after joining the discipline of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. His love for his mother often drew him to his native town. Whenever he left Delhi for Awadh, the Shaikh instructed him to visit Khwaja Mubarak at Gopamau on the way.[25]

There were several important disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who belonged to Awadh and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had his contact with them all. He showed particular respect to Khwaja Latif-u'd-din who was a senior disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya and was the first to join his discipline.[26] Sometime the Awadh group of disciples jointly undertook the journey to Delhi. Once Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, Maulana 'Ala-u'd-din Nili and Maulana Jalal together left for Delhi. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's mother sent a pony load of *khichri*

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23. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 239.

24. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*. pp. 186-187.

25. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 310.

26. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 317.

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with him to be used during the journey. At the first halt of his journey, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din got it boiled and served it to all his fellow travellers. Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya turned to Maulana 'Ala-u'd-din and said: "Did you notice his childish act? He exhausted all his wherewithal at the first stage of the journey. What will he do tomorrow?" Next day a man came and enquired from Shaikh Shams-u'd-din Yahya about the whereabout of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud and on being conducted to his presence, presented five gold coins to him. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din sent this money to Shaikh Shams-u'd-din Yahya through his servant Bashir with the remark: "Since the man saw you first and enquired my whereabouts from you, this *futuh* really belongs to you". Shaikh Shams-u'd-din Yahya again told Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din about this childish act in parting with this present. Throughout the journey whatever *futuh* came to him be distributed among his travelling companions and kept nothing for himself.[27] His faith in God, the real source of sustenance, was so great that he never cared for the morrow.

Sometimes when he arrived in the *Jama'at Khanah*, there was no space to accommodate him and the Shaikh had to apologize for this.[28] Sometimes the Shaikh had to restrict the period of stay in the *Jama'at Khanah* in view of the large number of visitors waiting for accommodation there. Very often Mongol invasions drove large number of people to the *khanqah* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya and he had no option but to ask visitors from Awadh to go back home.[29]

When his mother died he felt a void in his life and sought to fill it by longer stays with his spiritual mentor. He had two sisters – Bibi Bua Abdi and Bibi Lahri. The younger one, Bibi Lahri had died at an early age. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's attachment with Awadh was due to his elder sister, Bibi Bua Abdi and his nephews. When Bibi Bua Abdi died he brought his two nephews – Zain-u'd-din 'Ali, son of Bibi Abdi and Kamal-u'd-din Hamid, son of Bibi Lahri[30] – to the

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27. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, pp. 227-228.

28. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 259.

29. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 276-277.

30. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 284. Jamali however says (*Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p. 93) that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din had only one sister elder to himself and that Zain-u'd-din 'Ali and Kamal-u'd-din Hamid were her sons.

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Jama'at Khanah of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who remarked: "You have done well in bringing your nephews along". Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din then decided to stay in Delhi permanently at the feet of his master. The Great Shaikh assigned him a *hujrah* in his *Jama'at Khanah*[31] where he could devote himself to prayers and vigils. The inmates of the *Jama'at Khanah* were so impressed by his piety and devotion that they began to call him *Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud Ganj.*[32]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din devotion to his spiritual master was beyond measure. Akram Barasawi writes:[33]

حضرت شیخ نصیرالدین در محبت حضرت سلطان المشایخ به حدی
بی اختیار بود که از اراده و اختیار خویش بالکلیه مسلوب گشته
و سوای ذات با برکات انحضرت مطلوبی نداشت

(Hazrat Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was so overwhelmed by his love for Hazrat Sultan-u'l-Mashaikh that he had no option or choice of his own left. He had no object (of love) except the person of the Shaikh.)

Once Khwaja Muhammad Gazruni, a disciple of Shaikh Baha-u'd-din Zakariya stayed in the *Jama'at Khanah.* He woke up at night to offer his *tahqjjud* (mid-night) prayers and leaving his garments behind went to the river Jumna to perform ablutions. When he returned he did not find his quilt there and began to shout loudly in the *Jama'at Khanah.* Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was busy offering his prayers in a corner. Fearing lest the noise disturbed the Shaikh in his devotions on the upper storey of the *Jama'at Khanah,* he rushed out and offered his own quilt to him. Early next morning when Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya came to know of it, he was immensely pleased with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and gave his own quilt to him.[34]

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31. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 283. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin,* p. 93.

32. Ibid., p. 283. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin,* p. 92.

33. *Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar,* p. 179.

34. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya,* p. 236, *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 283-284.

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When Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din took the Shaikh's leave to go to Awadh, he never returned to his place of stay in Delhi. Instead he directed his host that his horse be sent to some village outside the city where he could ride on it.[35]

Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya formed a very high opinion of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's spiritual qualities and quiet dedication to him. One day the Great Shaikh referred to him in a conversation with Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Hansvi as *"Our Ibrahim Adham"*.[36] This was the highest compliment that Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya ever gave to any of his disciples.

RECEIVES KHILAFAT

A few months before the death of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya the question of appointment of *Khalifahs* was mooted in the inner circle of his disciples, like Syed Husain, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, Amir Khusrau, Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi and the two personal attendants of the Shaikh, Iqbal and Mubashshir.[37] After long consultations, Amir Khusrau drew up a list in which thirty two disciples of the Shaikh were recommended for the grant of *Khilafat Namahs*. "Why have you put in so many names?", asked Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. A second list was then prepared. The Shaikh approved it with some modifications.[38] Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi, an erudite scholar, drafted the document in Arabic and Syed Husain made several copies of it.[39] The Shaikh called Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar[40] first and granted him a *Khilafat Namāh* and a

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35. *Ahsan-u'l-Aqwal*, MS, pp. 16-17.

36. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 87.

37. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 220.

38. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 221. The Shaikh had objected to the inclusion of Maulana Siraj-u'd-din's (later known as Akhi Siraj) name in this list because he was not well-educated at that time.

39. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 221-222. For care taken by the Shaikh to prevent forgery of the document, see p. 221.

40. He was the grandson of Shaikh Jamal-u'd-din Hanswi, an eminent disciple and elder *Khalifah* of Baba Farid. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya was deeply indebted to Shaikh Jamal-u'd-din Hanswi for many acts of kindness. Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar was one of those three disciplies of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya being the other two — who stoutly resisted Muhammad bin Tughluq's policy of forcing the saints to accept government offices. For brief biographical references, see *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 248-256, 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 84-87; *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 84-88; *Gulzar-i-Abrar* (MS); *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS. I, pp. 298-303.

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Khil'at-i-Khilafat (robe of *Khilafat*). Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud was summoned next and was likewise granted the *Khil'at* and the *Khilafat Namah*. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud perhaps felt the precedence given to Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar and the Shaikh, realizing the delicacy of the situation, called both of them to his presence, asked them to embrace and congratulate each other and then remarked: "You are brothers. Don't care for precedence".[41] True to the advice of their great master both of them remained on the best of terms throughout their lives.[42]

This *Khilafat Namah* was given to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din on 20 Zi'l Hijjah, 724/1323. The Shaikh breathed his last one 18 Rabi'-u-Akhir 725 A.H./1324 A.D. In his last moments the Great Shaikh called Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and bestowed upon him all those articles of mystic regalia which had come down to him from the elders of his *silsilah* - *khirqah* (patched frock), *'asa* (rod), *musalla* (prayer-carpet), *tasbih* (rosary) and *kasa-i-chubin* (wooden bowl)[43]. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din humbly submitted before his dying master:

> "I cannot remain in Delhi in the absence of (my) *pir*. I shall then go for Hajj and pass my life in front of the shrine of the Prophet".

Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din asked him to remain in Delhi and bear the ill-treatment of the people with patience.[44] The advice of his master sustained him in his long and painful conflict with Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq.

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41. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 248-249.

42. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 84.

43. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p.91.

44. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p.91; *Sab'a' Sanabil*, p.63.

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Chapter III

AT THE HEAD OF THE CHISHTI SILSILAH

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din succeeded his master as the head of the Chishti *silsilah* in 1325 and worked in Delhi for thirty two years, till 1356, with a singleness of purpose which elicited praise from all spiritual descendants of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. He selected for his residence a place which is known today as *Chiragh-i-Delhi*. His early years as the head of the Chishti *silsilah* in Delhi were spent in appalling poverty. There were absolutely no means of livelihood and the door of *futuh* had not yet been opened on him. During these years of exacting hardship, his spirit of *tawakkul* (trust in God) was put to severe trial. Days in and days out he had to starve. He did not possess even a candle stick and had to pass his long lonely nights praying and meditating in a house without a flicker of light. He had no proper clothes and so, whenever any visitor called on him, he hastily covered his tattered garments with the *Khirqah* of his master and talked to him.[1] Passing his days in such straitened circumstances he kept alive the traditions of his great master and people found in his company "the fragrance of the *majlis* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din".[2]

In his early days of poverty Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was helped by his friends who themselves had very meagre means of livelihood. Once the Shaikh fasted for two days without taking anything at the *iftar* time. A kindly neighbour, Nathu Patwa,[3] brought to him two

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1. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 213-214.

2. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 241.
Amir Khurd says:

مرا از مجلس تو بوی یار مـــی آیـد
خوشم ز بوی تو کز سوی یار می آیـد
هـزار پیرهـــن دل چـــو گل شـود پاره
ازیں نسیم کـه از کـــوی یار مـــی آید

3. Prof. Mohd. Habib calls him "Nathu of Patwa". (*Islamic Culture*, April 1946, p. 136). I have not been able to find any place of the name of *Patwa*. I think Nathu was a *patwa* by profession. Ibbetson writes in *Punjab Castes*: "*Patwa* (Caste No. 187). From *pat* silk, and means any worker in silk, but is generally used only for those who make silken cord and waist bandes, thread beads and silk, and so forth. They are called *patoi* in the west. They are said often to be *khatris*." (p. 264)

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pieces of bread, "God knew whether of mash or barley", with some gravy on them. The Shaikh relished this humble food more than the most sumptuous feasts ever arranged in his honour. In the year 1353 when he was at the height of his fame and had an open kitchen where large number of people had their meals, he had not forgotten the gift of Nathu, the *patwa*.[4]

During his time *khanqah-life* had been subjected to severe criticism by Muhammad bin Tughluq and many of the disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had been forced to migrate to the Deccan. The living tradition of the Chishti order had thus been killed and Delhi which had about two thousand flourishing *khanqahs* was reduced to such a position that except a few, no mausoleum in Delhi had even a candle stick.[5] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's presence saved the *silsilah* from eclipse in the capital. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's intuitive intelligence had heard the rumbling of a distant storm and had advised him to stay in Delhi and face the fury of the storm with courage and forbearance.[6] It was a very depressing atmosphere in which he had to work. The sadness of his spirit reflected his realization that he was the last bastion of Chishti ideology in Delhi. So long as he was alive the disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, whether in Hansi or in Daulatabad, looked to Delhi for guidance and inspiration and their emotional links with Delhi remained in tact. When Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar visited Delhi after the death of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, both the saints tried to touch the feet of the other and they wept bitterly at the passing away of the Great Shaikh.[7]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud showed great consideration for the disciples of his master and maintained cordial relations with them. He admired their spiritual qualities with an open heart. His remark about Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi that mystic journey which took him a month or two to cover was traversed by him in an hour, has been quoted by Mir Khurd.[8] Strange were his ways of

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4. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 213.

5. *Subh-u'l-A'sha*, p. 29.

6. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 46.

7. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 84.

8. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 266.

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reciprocating the gestures of his colleagues. One day Khwaja Mubarak of Gopamau came to see him and presented some *tankas*, saying: "I was coming to you when a friend presented these *tankas* to me. It is the practice of *dervishes* that when they proceed to meet any saint, whatever they get in the way, they present it to the person they are going to visit". Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud smiled and accepted the present. When Khwaja Mubarak took leave he presented double the amount to him.[9] He even granted *khilafat* to some of the disciples of his Shaikh. Maulana Shihab-u'd-din Kasturi, a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, was extremely devoted to prayers and meditation. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud permitted him to enrol disciples.[10] Maulana Yusuf Badaoni was a senior disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. His pious exterior and suavity of manners was much appreciated. He also visited Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.[11] Even when Hamid Qalandar, the compiler of *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, informed him that he was initiated in his discipline by Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, he stood up to embrace him.[12]

Shaikh Burhan-u'd-din Gharib was a very close friend of the Shaikh who had lived with him at his house. When he migrated to Daulatabad, he kept himself well informed of the developments in Delhi. On hearing about the treatment meted out to him by Muhammad bin Tughluq he wept bitterly.[13] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud on his part regularly arranged his *'urs* after his death.[14] He received even his *khalifahs* and disciples with great affection. When Shaikh Zain-u'd-din Da'ud, a distinguished *khalifah* of Shaikh Burhan-u'd-din Gharib, left Delhi, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din went upto Hauz-i-Shamsi to see him off and placed his own *'amama* on his head.[15]

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9. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 310.
10. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 316-317.
11. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 318.
12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 11.
13. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*. For details infra.
14. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 8-9.
15. *Rauzah-i-Auliya*, p. 29.

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The relations between Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud and Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar were also very cordial. They sincerely followed the advice of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who had asked them to have brotherly relations. When Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar visited Delhi after the death of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, both the saints tried to touch the feet of the other and wept bitterly at the passing away of the Great Shaikh.[16] Whenever anybody belonging to the circle of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din saw the Shaikh at Hansi he received him cordially and hailed him as برادر زادہ ٔ مائی . (my brother's son). Similarly Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din welcomed in Delhi if any one associated with Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar came to see him. 'Afif informs us:

خدمت شیخ نصیرالدین آن شخص را در کنار گرفتی
و با او رغبت بسیار کردی و درخانقاه با جای خود داشتی [17]

(Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din embraced that person, loved him and made him sit at his place in the *khanqah*).

Disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya referred their problems to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. He listened to them patiently but did not hesitate to remark that complaint about the times was not the practice of the elders of the *silsilah*.[18] Nevertheless they told him:[19]

ام روز جای شیخ ما شما اید ۔ روا باشد که درد خود بشما بگویم .

(Today you are at the place of our Shaikh. It is in the fitness of things that I mention my worries to you.)

The Shaikh pointed out to them that times had changed, the character of the bureaucracy had changed, the attitude of the rich had changed. Under the circumstances referring of problem to the

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16. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 84.

17. *Ibid*, p. 84.

18. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 87.

19. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 88.

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rich and the influential for redressal was neither feasible nor effective.[20]

Disciples of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya referred their spiritual problems also to him. Shaikh 'Aziz-u'd-din saw Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya in a dream directing him to keep fast of the heart. He asked Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din what it meant. He said: "It means sitting in quiet contemplation *(muraqbah)*".[21]

Like Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who always made special arrangements in connection with the *'urs* celebration of his spiritual master, Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din also made elaborate preparations for the *'urs* of his Shaikh. His mind went back to Bukhara where the *'urs* celebrations of Shaikh Saif-u'd-din Bakharzi were planned on a grand scale and resembled 'Eid celebrations. Three villages were assigned for this purpose and each village sent 40,000 *dinars* for celebrations. The details of Shaikh Bakharzi's *'urs* which he mentioned while making arrangements for the *'urs* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya show his eagerness to plan it on a grand scale.[22]

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20. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 87-88.

21. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 401.

22. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 266.

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Chapter IV

KHANQAH LIFE

Under Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya the *khanqah* organization of medieval India had reached its highest point of perfection. Every detail of its functioning had been worked out meticulously and rules governing discipline in the *Jama'at Khanah* had been clearly laid down.[1] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud followed those traditions as best as he could but times had registered a change and the hostile attitude of the government had created an atmosphere which did not permit the growth of *khanqah* traditions. The exodus of Delhi population to the southern capital further caused a void in the social and cultural life and traditions of Delhi. Muhammad bin Tughluq forcibly settled in Delhi the elite of adjoining *qasbahs*,[2] but this could not fill the vacuum in the religious life of Delhi. Circumstances forced Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din to make changes here and there to meet the new challenges of the time. He declared that what justified any institution or practice was its sanction in *shari'at* law, not the tradition of the spiritual mentor.[3] This firm declaration of principle silenced opposition against Khanqah life and it became possible for Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud to mend the house after the storm had subsided. With great effort and patience he put together the scattered bolts and shackles in order to build the structure of Khanqah life dismantled by Muhammad bin Tughluq.

All sorts of people – mystics and non-mystics – visited Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. We find in his assembly scholars[4]

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1. The *Ahsan-u'l-Aqwal* shows how *burhan* (argument) and *ravish* (pattern of behaviour) of traditions established by the saints in the north were cited as models of action in the South.

2. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuzh Shahi*, p. 474.

3. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.

4. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 12,86,92,107,238 etc.

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(*danishmand*), students[5], *qalandars*[6], jewellers[7], mendicants[8], handcapped people[9], shepherds[10], teachers[11], religious orators[12], officers[13], army men[14], villagers[15], *nawisindas*[16], nobles[17]. These visitors came from far and near, Yemen[18], Arab lands[19], Bihar[20], Kaithal[21], Multan[22] etc. The Shaikh received them cordially and attended to their problems with deep sympathy. His principle in this regard was:

درویش را می باید که باهمه خلق چناں باشد [23]
که بدانند که این ازان ما است

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5. Ibid, p. 77 etc.
6. Ibid, p. 136.
7. Ibid, p. 95.
8. Ibid, p. 79.
9. Ibid, p. 74.
10. Ibid, pp. 40,156.
11. Ibid, p. 210, etc.
12. Ibid, pp. 31-32.
13. Ibid, p. 86.
14. Ibid, p. 146.
15. Ibid, p. 156.
16. Ibid, p. 242.
17. Ibid, pp. 120-124.
18. Ibid, p. 125.
19. Ibid, pp. 201.
20. Ibid, p. 273.
21. Ibid, p. 158.
22. Ibid, p. 182.
23. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 114.

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(A *durevesh* should behave with (different types of people) in such a way that every (group) should think that he belongs to them).

His method of advice was slightly different from that of his master. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's advice was always hidden in parables and stories; Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had to address himself to the problems directly. Perhaps this was due to change in circumstances. In Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's days people patiently listened to his discourse and derived necessary guidance and inspiration from it. In Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din 's time people came impatient and rushing and sought immediate and direct advice. The Shaikh himself once said:

"Some people come excited and worried and say: 'Hurry up and do this work'. (If their demand is not immediatley fulfilled), they speak ill, and quarrell. A *durwesh* has to be patient (under all circumstances)."[24]

Among the visitors there were two types of people: those who came with some worldly problem and those who came for spiritual solace and guidance. People who brought their worldly problems saddened the Shaikh's heart, even if they did not speak out their mind. He could read on their faces the nature of problem they had brought. Those who came with spiritual motives delighted the Shaikh and he spoke to them with profound interest about God and the Prophet.[25]

The Shaikh listened to the problems of the visitors patiently but he always told them that their miseries were the outcome of their own misdeeds. "Not an ant will bite you but as a punishment for some wrong committed by you", he used to warn the people.[26] His method of linking misery with misdeed was extremely effective in bringing about a change in the lives of the people. He attributed his personal troubles to some of his own doings and distresses.[27]

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24. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 106.

25. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 105.

26. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 121.

27. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 246.

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The Shaikh always asked his visitors about their vocation, their interests and their pre-occupations. His advice took into account the vocational background of the person concerned. We may meet some of the visitors in the *Jama'at Khanah.*

(1) A *durwesh* from Yemen came to the Shaikh. The Shaikh gave something to him but he was not satisfied and did not leave. He said that he had dreamt the preceding night that the Shaikh had given his garments to him. The Shaikh handed over his garments to him.[28]

(2) "What do you do?", the Shaikh asks a visitor. "I am a cultivator," he replies. "Earning bread through cultivation is good. Many cultivators have been spiritually gifted men", says the Shaikh and then narrates a story about Imam Ghazzali's contact with a cultivator.[29]

(3) A visitor from Kanher (?) comes to see the Shaikh. "What keeps you busy?" asks the Shaikh. "Teaching the children", replies the visitor. The Shaikh starts narrating the story of a Hafiz of Kanher who used to teach the boys but had spiritual qualities.[30]

(4) The Shaikh enquires from Hamid Qalandar about his younger brother who was perhaps employed in the army and had left for the camp. The Shaikh remarks:[31]

بعضی لشکریاں چوں باز می آیند نیکو باز می آیند

(Some soldiers when they return (from the camp) come in good condition).

(5) The Shaikh explains to Hamid Qalandar the meaning of mystic absorption (*masghuliyat*), and humorously remarks that it did not mean taking pen, paper and inkpot to some lonely place and sitting there to compose verses. He offers to give up his involvement

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28. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 125.

29. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 156.

30. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 210.

31. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 146.

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in poetry. The Shaikh advises him not to abandon it.[32] This was the approach of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who did not permit Amir Khusrau to give up poetry.

(6) A visitor comes and seeks the Shaikh's help in some matter. The Shaikh reads *fatiha* (first chapter of the *Qur'an*) for the fulfilment of his need and then says that real pleasure of life lies in adopting *faqr* (life of poverty and resignation). Involvement in material pursuits leads to nothing but grief and worry. After narrating different stories he quotes Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya that the type of woes and worries that he had in his life, no one else had. People brought all sorts of their problems to him which so touched his heart that he himself became grief-stricken[33] and his own heart beat in sympathy with those who were suffering. The way in which Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's discourse proceeds shows that he had also experienced the same feelings of grief at the misery of others.

(7) Two handicapped persons – one lame and the other blind – came to see the Shaikh. He received them with great affection and sympathy. He first enquired about the problems of the blind and whatever he asked for, he provided for him. Then he turned to the lame person and solved his problem. When they left he narrated the story of Shaikh Najib-u'd-din Mutawakkil's treatment of visitors on an 'Eid day.[34]

(8) A learned man conveys to the Shaikh the respects of a noble. The Shaikh enquires about his welfare. "He had to pay some government money and so he has been put in prison and is being tortured there", submitted the scholar. "This is the fruit of getting involved in *shughl* (government service)", says the Shaikh and then goes on to narrate long stories about the earlier people who 'lived the life of Junaid and Shibli while engaged in worldly affairs'.[35]

(9) A Syed, Sharaf-u'd-din, comes to the Shaikh to be initiated in his discipline. The Shaikh enquires about his vocation.

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32. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 70.

33. Ibid, pp. 102-105.

34. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 74-75.

35. Ibid, p. 86.

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Before he could say anything, Hamid Qalandar interjected and said that he was Superintendent of the Jewellers' Market. "He is a pious man. His mother is devoted to prayers. His household comprises pure and pious people", continued Hamid. The Shaikh initiated him into his discipline and advised him to:

i. follow the *sunnah* of the Prophet – abstain from things forbidden and carry out those ordained,
ii. abstain from speaking lies while transacting business, and
iii. charge only the just and reasonable price.

He then went on to narrate the story of a honest trader whose dealings were appreciated by Imam Ghazzali.[36]

(10) A learned man from Sihali comes to the Shaikh and submits:

"I am one of your servants, a resident of Sihali. Most of the residents of that place are pious and many of them are your disciples. The women of the place who are also in your discipline, are more pious than men".

At this stage Hamid Qalandar intervened and said:

"This piety of the people there is due to the blessing accruing from your discipleship".

The Shaikh enquired about his vocation. He was a school teacher. "It is a good occupation: to be busy in reading the books and teaching the *Qur'an* to others. Whoever teaches the *Qur'an* is always with ablution. This is a good vocation", observes the Shaikh. Then he narrates the story of Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki's early education in Ush.[37]

(11) A big noble visits the Shaikh. He had been suspended from service but was reinstated due to the Shaikh's prayer. "Welcome! Sit down", says the Shaikh. The visitor submits that as a result of the Shaikh's prayer he had been released from custody the

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36. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 94-95.

37. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 107.

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preceding night. The Shaikh remarks:

"If a thorn pricks any body's foot or an ant bites him, he should consider it a punishment for some misdeed, as the *Qur'an* says:

Whatever misfortune
Happens to you, is because
Of the things your hands
Have wrought (S. XLII:30)

The Shaikh then goes on to describe the blessings that accrue from good deeds. He refers to public works, mosques, bridges, inns, wells etc. the construction of which brought bliss to man. His advice was that one could adopt any vocation that he liked, but should not forget God.[38]

Following the Chishti tradition, the Shaikh kept an open kitchen (*langar*). However, times had changed and it was not so big as that of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. The Shaikh neverthless entertained visitors, accommodated guests who came in large numbers[39] and distributed food in the *khanqah*. When the Shaikh sat at the *dastarkhwan* (table spread), usually three trays of food were placed before him. He gave two to distinguished disciples present, like Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz and Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir. About the third tray he would tell the attendants: انجا ببر (Take it there)'. Nobody knew what it meant.[40] It appears that even when he was not there at the *dastar khwan* his carpet was spread there and people sat wherever they liked.[41] On the occasion of *'urs* celebrations of the elder saints elaborate arrangements were made for the distribution of food. During the month of Ramazan the Shaikh invited people for *iftar*[42]. Sometimes he entertained guests with rice and purified butter.[43] On 'Eid days the number of visitors

38. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 120-122.

39. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 259.

40. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 20.

41. Ibid.

42. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 129-130.

43. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 198.

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was large: the table cloth was spread and food with *halwa* (sweat meat) and other delicacies was served to all visitors.[44] Sometimes the visitors enjoyed food of different kinds and to please the visitors he also partook food from it. Once a woman who had twice performed Hajj brought some trays of food on the heads of slave-girls. It was served along with the *khanqah* food. The Shaikh broke his *nafli* (voluntary) fast to please the woman.[45] We find on the table-cloth of the Shaikh different types of sweets, honey, pastries etc.[46] If at any time he failed to provide food to the visitors he gave money to them to buy food.[47]

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44. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 213.

45. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 232-233.

46. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 232.

47. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 241.

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Chapter V

PERSONAL LIFE AND ROUTINE

An atmosphere of gloom, self-abnegation and sadness hung around the life of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. This was as much due to the milieu as to the inner perceptions of his soul. But what sustained him in the midst of this atmosphere was the faith that "the Prophet of Allah was a man of prolonged sadness and deep reflection".[1] He rejected voluntarily all those affluent circumstances of life which a merchant dealer of wool enjoyed in those days. Turning his back to large number of slaves which his father had left, he adopted the life of a scholar and acquired in Awadh whatever education it could provide. It must have been there in Awadh that he learnt at the feet of Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya, a distinguished scholar of his times. Thereafter he lived in the jungles of Awadh and searched lonely corners to devote his time to prayers and penitences. When he reached Delhi to join the discipline of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, he was past forty. Both academically and spiritually he had covered a long journey. A mystic teacher could now give final touches to his spiritual personality. His stay in the *Jama'at Khanah* of the Shaikh cast his personality in consonance with the Chishti mystic ideals. He learnt there the *raison d'etre* of mystic effort and the aims and ideals of *Khanqah* organisation. His request to live at some lonely place, away from the hurry and bustle of life, was turned down by Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who directed him to live among the people and face their blows and buffets and return evil with good.

On succeeding to the headship of the *silsilah*, after the death of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya (1325), Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's life passed through two distinct phases: 1325 to 1351 and from 1351 to 1356.

(a) The first phase of twenty six years was one of test and tribution. His strained relationship with Muhammad bin Tughluq created a serious problem for him and the Chishti organization in Delhi. He faced the situation with patience and resignation.

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1. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 103.

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believing all the time that it was this ordeal to which Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had referred in his advice.

(b) The second phase of six or seven years was a period of convalescence. Years of inimical relations with the Sultan had not broken his nerves, but had seared his soul and introduced a note of sadness in his life. Firuz Shah had great respect for him and was in fact, obliged to him in facilitating his rise to the throne but he never sought any favours from him. He wanted to have his life free both from the frown and the favour of the Sultans. He did not visit the court of Firuz. In fact during this period he appears reconstructing the house after the fury of the storm rather than consorting with the king or the bureaucracy. However, his eyes could see another disaster in the offing. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's qualities as a mystic teacher cannot be appreciated without a clear appraisal of the social and cultural scene of the time. Not long afterwards the fabric of the Delhi Sultanate broke down and provincial dynasties replaced its central organization. Similarly the Chishti order with its centrally compact organization collapsed and provincial *khanqahs* appeared all over the country, unconnected with any central *khanqah.* The Shaikh sadly confessed that religious and moral degeneration had touched its nadir and honeycombed the Muslim society.[2]

Disintegrating social order, increasing inflation and rising cost of living created difficult problems for the Shaikh. Again and again his mind went back to the days of Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji when the necessaries of life were cheap:[3] one *maund* of wheat could he had for $7^1/_2$ *jitals,* equal quantity of sugar for half a *dirham,* ordinary sugar was available at the rate of one *jital* a *maund.* Cloth and other articles were also cheap.[4] A quilt could be prepared at a very small cost, and a good feast could be arranged in two to four *tankas.*[5] There were a number of *langars* (free kitchens) in Delhi, like the *langar* of Malik Yar Parran, where food was freely

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2. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar,* p. 82.

3. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 243, 185, 88.

4. Ibid, p. 185.

5. Ibid, p. 240.

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distributed.[6] Then referring to his own times (the reign of Firuz Shah) the Shaikh said:[7]

ایں زماں نہ آں لنگرداران و نہ آں بندگان ماندہ اند ۔
و نہ آں لنگرھا ماندہ ۔ھمہ خراب شدند

(These days neither those *langars*, nor those people have survived. All have been ruined.)

The Shaikh felt deeply this change of the social situation. People complained to him about the climate of Delhi[8] in summer days, but he felt the bitterness of social climate far more depressing. A man comes to the Shaikh and complains about his straitened circumstances and the hard times (روزگار). He informs the Shaikh that his only source of income was the one third of the earnings of his slave. He also narrates the story of a person who had succeeded in getting an employment on the recommendation of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. The Shaikh heard him patiently but remarked:[9]

مولانا ! دراں وقت معتقداں بسیار بودند،
ایں زماں بہ کہ تواں گفت، صبر می باید کرد

(Maulana! At that time there were many (sincere) believers. Whom can (I) recommend now? (We) should be patient and resigned to our lot.)

It was not an easy job in this atmosphere to bear the burden of running an organization which the Great Shaikh, Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, had developed to the highest point of mystic efficiency and effectiveness. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was busy all through the day[10] in looking after and running the organization with a deep sense of responsibility.

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6. Ibid, p. 185.
7. Ibid, p. 185.
8. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 70.
9. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 88.
10. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 60.

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Despite all the inclemencies of the atmosphere, the Shaikh never betrayed any nervousness or frustration on his face or in his actions. He was always cool, quiet and collected. Even while narrating pathetic or emotionally charged stories, he kept his composure and did not shed tears,[11] as was the habit of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. One day Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz was presented before him weeping, flustered and disturbed. He turned to him and said.[12]

بشنو چه طریقهٔ سالکان بهتر آنکه پیش گرفتهٔ اشارت
بخویش کرد ـ گفت هم چنیں نباشی و ما را باں وقار و سکون
هیچ وقتی معیشت ممکن نشد، خدای تعالی ما را به هیچ جای
سکونی و آرامی نداد و مضطرب و متحول و پریشاں داشت،
کاریکه بر دست ما نیست چارهٔ آں نیست ۔

(Listen! Are the ways you have adopted better than those of the *saliks* (referring to himself). Why can't you be like them? At no time did we have a living with prestige and peace. God did not give us peace and comfort at any place. We were disturbed, distracted and worried. Whatever is not in our power, we should not be worried about that.)

Details about the *Jama'at Khanah* of the Shaikh are not available. However it appears from some references in *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, that he also had a room on the roof (*bala-i-bam*)[13] like Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Some of his audition parties were held there.[14]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud did not keep good health.[15] Endless fasts and penitences in youth, with excessive use of lemon and *sambhalu*, had made his physical frame extremely delicate and vulnerable to disease. He suffered from piles[16] and yawning[17] also

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11. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 79.
12. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 112.
13. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 31,135,219.
14. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 31.
15. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 257.
16. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 61.
17. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 30.

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had become a disease with him. Once a visitor presented a *khamira* (concoction) to him as remedy for piles. When the Shaikh suspected some alcoholic ingredient in it, he asked his servant Bashir to bury it deep under ground.[18]

Despite all the handicaps and difficulties Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud lived an extremely graceful life – loving cleanliness and purity everywhere. According to Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz the place where he sat was extremely tidy, neat and clean. He used to change his clothes every Friday but his clothes always appeared freshly washed and spotlessly clean. Except the wrinkles on his sleeves, it appeared as if he just had a change. Heaps of fresh and sweet smelling flowers lay on his right and left. One day he instructed his nephew Maulana Zain-u'd-din to distribute the flowers, white and red, among the people present. He himself picked up some flowers and began to smell them.[19] He spoke to the visitors in low and measured tones and abstained completely from pedantic or artificial conversation. His aesthetic sense was so developed and delicate that once some earthen pots and jars were brought before him. Some of them had black spots. He did not like them and said: "Zain-u'd-din! Remove these from my sight".[20] Whenever the Shaikh was pleased at any good news he said *Al-Hamdu Lillah* (Praise be to God) and put both his hands on his face.[21]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's daily routine has not been mentioned with the same meticulous care with which the programme of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya has been described by Mir Khurd. In fact nobody undertook to write his biographical details on the model of *Siyar-u'l-Auliya.* It is through his conversations that we get some interesting details about his daily life. The pattern of his daily engagements could not, is any case, be different from that of the Great Shaikh. The Shaikh used to have some special gatherings also in which men like Maulana Zain-u'd-din Daulatabadi, Syed Nasir-u'd-din, Mahmud Baqai and others participated.[22] But generally he

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18. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 61.

19. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 159.
The Urdu translation has that the Shaikh recited *Darud* on smelling these flowers (p. 116).

20. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 112.

21. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 336.

22. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 241.

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talked in open *majlis*, comprising audience of different types and categories.

The Shaikh fasted almost regularly. He delayed the taking of *sahri* (food taken before dawn by those who fast) to the last moment after which the time expired, and broke the fast as soon as the sun went down. At *sahri* he took plain rice or rice boiled with lentil.[23] At the *iftar* (just after sunset when the fast is broken) time some dry loaves of bread were placed before him. He took a little piece and distributed the rest among those present. Having taken a piece of bread he, like Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, drank some water.[24] There were people who thought that the better way was to drink water first and then eat anything solid. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz informs us:[25]

بندگی خواجه صبح وقتی در طعامی و شربتی و شیرینی
که باسم روش پیش آئیده آورندی شریك نشدی، مگر خربزه
البته یك پرکاله دو پرکاله کشیدی خوردی

(The Khwaja did not take anything from the presents of foods, sweets and *sherbets* that came in the morning. But he tested one or two slices of water-melons).

Even in his old age he meticulously followed his routine and despite illness and old age regularly fasted. One day he told Hamid Qalandar:

ما پیر شده ایم، روزه می توانیم داشت، تو چرا نمی توانی؟

(I have grown old but I can fast. How is it that you cannot fast?)[26]

The management of the *khanqah* was looked after by his nephew,[27] Khwaja Zain-u'd-din. Bashir was his personal

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23. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 162.

24. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 149.

25. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 150.

26. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 71.

27. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 213. He has been referred to as:

خادم و مالك و ضابط خانهٔ شیخ

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attendant.[28] Despite all his worries, he had a sense of humour. One day he was feeling hungry. He asked for some food. The man said:

خیر نه پخته اند

(Good! It has not be cooked).

The Shaikh smiled and said:

چوں طعام نه پخته اند خیر از کجا آمد [29]

(When food has not been cooked, what is good in it).

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din considered the small hours of the morning to be the real time of spiritual benedictions and bliss and cited the sayings of the Prophet in support of his own experience.[30] But his condition in the morning was different from that of his spiritual master. The Great Shaikh's sleep laden eyes pointed to his blissful nocturnal experiences, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh appeared broken *(shikasta)* and exhausted.

Notwithstanding every other extentuating circumstance, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's life was one of deep involvement in cosmic emotion.[31] His recitation of the following verses[32] could not but thrill the heart of the listener:

دنیا شه را و قیصر و خاقان را
دوزخ بد را بهشت مر نیکان را
تسبیح فرشته را ثنا مر انسان را
جانان ما را و جان ما جانان را

(Let the world be for the King, the *Qaiser* and the Khaqan,
Let Hell be (the punishment) for the wicked and Paradise (the reward) for the pious,
Let angels and human beings be busy in chanting *His* praises,
For me is my Beloved and for Him, is my life.)

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28. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 307.

29. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 112.

30. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 111.

31. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 25, 28, 37, etc.

32. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 37.

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There were moments when the Shaikh was found either lost in thought or in a disturbed emotional condition.[33] With his *dastar* loosely placed on his head, his arm resting on the ground, he would painfully shake his head, talk a little slowly, but again pass into reverie.[34] The audience screamed when it saw the Shaikh in this condition. When he recovered from his emotional stir, the following quatrain, often cited by 'Ain-u'l-Quzat Hamadani[35], came on his lips:

برخاسته ز جان و تن می باید
سر آمده ز خویشتن می باید
در هر قدمی هزار بند افزون است
زیں گرم روی بند شکن می باید

(One should get rid of his life and body,
He should get out of himself.
There are a thousand bonds at every step,
One should break all these bonds).

The Shaikh was very fond of these verses:[36]

اوحد دل را ز خویش بر کن و گرد آر
و ایں رخت بہر سوی میفگن گرد آر
عمریَ چوں گل ببـاد دادی یـك دم
چوں غنچه فراهم شود دامن گرد آر

But it was seldom that the Shaikh talked in public about cosmic emotion. Most of his discourses centred round:

حکایت معاملت و عبادات مشایخ و مجاهدات
و مکارم ایشـاں بودی سخن در بیان محبت [37]
و عشق کم تر بودی

(Stories of good dealings (with men) prayers, penitences and virtues of elder saints. About love and cosmic emotion he talked less).

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33. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 97, 110.

34. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 97.

35. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 97.

36. *Haza'ir-u'l-Quds*, p. 158.

37. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 343.

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Nevertheless he was deeply intereted in *Sama'* (audition parties) but he strictly adhered to the restrictions imposed by the elder saints and never permitted the use of musical instruments *(mazamir)*. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz one day saw the Shaikh on the upper storey of his *Khanqah* hearing music with Khwaja Hasan, Maulana Shihab-u'd-din Kanturi and Muhammad Kar. The Shaikh was dancing on the roof in such ecstatic condition that the entire roof shook as he moved. Later, he told Gisu Daraz that he could not do more.[38] Even in his old age he became extraordinarily active in *sama'* gatherings and used to dance, run and jump with such energy that even younger people could not join him. One day there was an audition party at the house of Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz. The Shaikh was also there. The musician recited the couplet:

سگی دنبـــــال آں محـــمل او دواں مـــن هم
منش لبیك میگویم گر او سگ را همی خواند

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din ran so fast that he tumbled and fell down. Thereafter he never got up in *sama'* and used to enjoy it sitting, with storms of emotion passing over his face.[39] One day the Shaikh went in raptures on hearing the verse:

جفا بر عاشقاں گفتی نخواهم کرد، هم کردی
قلم بر بیدلاں گفتی نخواهم راند، هم راندی

(You promised not to subject your lovers to torture, but did it; You promised not to erase the name of those who have lost their hearts (in cosmic emotion), nevertheless you did it).

Maulana Mughis wrote a brochure criticising attribution of جفا (oppression) to God as sacrilegious. Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani presented this brochure to the Shaikh who summoned Maulana Mughis and conferred a *dastar* (cloth wrapped round the turban) and *durra* (upper garment) on him. But he uttered no word. Next day in the audition party the Shaikh went into raptures on hearing the following couplets:

ما طبل مفا نه دوش چه بے باك زدیم
عالی علمش بـــر ســـر افـــلاك زدیم
از بهر یکی مـــغ بچـــهٔ میخـــواره
صد باره کلاه توبـــه بر خـــاك زدیم

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38. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 31.

39. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 306.

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(How fearlessly we have put the drum of the Magi on our shoulders,
His high standard we have set on the skies.
For one drunkard lad of the Magi,
We have hundred times went back from our repentance).

When the Shaikh retired to his room, he called Maulana Mughis and said:

مولانا ! بنویس که ایں چا چه عمل بود

(Maulana! Write what was the nature of this act)

So saying the Shaikh sent him back.[40]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din passed his whole life in celibacy, perhaps inspired by his master, who used to say: "Marriage is permitted but celibacy is a matter of courage. If a man is so absorbed in thoughts of God that he feels no prompting of sex-desire and is not conscious of what it is, inevitably his eyes, tongue and limbs will be protected. He ought to remain unmarried. But if a man cannot be so absorbed and his heart is prompted by sex-desire, then he should get married".[41] However, it appears that in his early life he had to struggle hard to control and stamp out all sex-desire. He brought himself on the verge of death by taking leaves of *sambhalu*, efficacious in eradicating sex-appetite. But this struggle took place during the period of his stay in Awadh. In the company of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya all these desires were sublimated and a different approach was developed in Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din. Struggle was replaced by sublimation of desires and asceticism yielded place to cosmic emotion.

Like his spiritual master, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din looked also after his nephews with the same concern with which one would have looked after his own children. We find Maulana Kamal-u'd-din, later known as *'Allama*, putting questions to him about mystic concepts and the Shaikh replying to them with great affection and understanding. Khwaja Zain-u'd-din was also very affectionately brought up by him.

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40. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 337.

41. *Faw'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, p. 156.

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Women joined the discipline of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din in large numbers. The women of Sihali were mostly his disciples and were extremely pious[42] and devoted to religious practices and penitences. When the Shaikh admitted any woman to his discipline he advised her to offer prayers regularly, keep fasts of *ayyam-i-biz* (12,13,14 of the lunar month), treat the slaves and the slave-girls with kindness and abstain from thrashing them.[43] He further asked them to be kind and polite to all people. The Shaikh's method of initiating women was like this: he asked the person who brought them for admission to the discipline to bring a cup of water. He read some prayers on this water and put his finger in it. With the saint's *salam* (good wishes) this cup was then given to the woman who placed her finger in it and announced having joined the discipleship of the Shaikh. The Shaikh used to cite a *hadith* of the Prophet in support of this method of initiation.[44] He never touched the hand of any woman or looked at her face.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh had seen many parts of India – from Awadh to Delhi and from Delhi to Sind. When he joined the discipline of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya his mother was alive and he used to visit her frequently. When she died, he settled in Delhi permanently and brought his sister also to Delhi. Thereafter he did not go out except when he was summoned to Sind by Muhammad bin Tughluq. While on his way to Sind he had a brief halt at Narnaul and Multan. He had thus seen the region now known as U.P., from Awadh to Delhi, and the Punjab and Sind.

In Delhi Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din used to visit the shrine of Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki almost regularly.[45] When he was summoned to Sind he left his instructions to Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz to go to Qutb Sahib's grave every day.[46] He visited ailing friends to enquire about their health.[47]

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42. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 107.

43. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 134.

44. Ibid, p. 134.

45. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 57.

46. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 182.

47. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 218.

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It appears that some people often came to him in a group, like Maulana Hamid, Maulana Adam, Khwaja Ladhu Shah and Maulana Sharaf-u'd-din.[48] It is perhaps on this account that in *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin* the audience shown is almost the same throughout. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz however always came alone, never in company.[49]

Turab's Attempt on Shaikh's life

One day, after offering his *zuhr* prayers in congregation, the Shaikh retired into his room for rest. There was no attendant at the door and even Maulana Zain-u'd-din 'Ali, who was usually present at that time, was away. A *qalandar*, Turab[50] by name, managed to enter the room and began to injure the saint with a knife.[51] He inflicted eleven wounds on his body. The Shaikh's palm was severely injured and his fingers were so mutilated that he could not, during the rest of his life, take a pen in his hand or raise his finger while offering prayers.[52] When blood gushed out of the wounds and ran into the water-hole[53], some disciples of the Shaikh rushed into the room bewildered and dazed. They were about to retaliate upon the *qalandar*[54] that the Shaikh intervened and asked Maulana 'Abdul Maqtaddir Thanesari, Shaikh Sadr-u'd-din Tabib and Maulana Zain-u'd-din 'Ali to swear on oath that they would not harm or harass the assailant in any way. "I hope your knife has not injured your hand", he asked Turab and presenting twenty *tankas* to him told him to run away before the news went round. This is Hamid Qalandar's account.[55]

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48. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 135.

49. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 135.

50. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 286. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, however says that Turab was a mad man and often visited the Shaikh. p. 91.

51. According to Syed Muhamamd Gisu Daraz it was pen-knife کارد قلم تراش *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 91.

52. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 91.

53. According to *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, (p. 91) it ran ten yards into the courtyard.

54. The author of *Saba' Sanabil* says that the Shaikh concealed him in his *hujra* and, at mid-night, asked him to fly away from Delhi (p. 64).

55. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, pp. 286-287.

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Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz gives further details. When blood flowed into the courtyard, Maulana Zain-u'd-din rushed into the room. The *qalandar* attacked him also. Then Khwaja Bashir came in and caught hold of the assailant and snatched his knife. The Shaikh, who was profusely bleeding but had not lost consciousness, anxiously cried out; "whoever reprimands him (Turab), I shall be displeased with him". The news of this incident soon spread and rumours began to circulate in the city that the Shaikh had succumbed to the injuries. People rushed into the streets, bare-headed, shrieking and crying. Physicians visited the Shaikh and attended on him. Sadr-i-Jahan and Malik Nathu, the Hajib-i-Khas, came to inquire about his condition. Malik Nathu informed the saint that the Sultan had deputed him to investigate into the matter. He requested the Shaikh to hand over Turab to him. The Shaikh told him that he had forgiven Turab. Sadr-i-Jahan reported the matter to the Sultan and sought his orders. Turab was set free on the recommendations of the Shaikh, but when people heard about his release, they gathered in large numbers in the streets and bazars of Delhi with stones in their hands. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din summoned Malik Nathu and told him: "People would kill Turab. Send fifty soldiers to accompany him and give him (Turab) two *tankas* also because he is hungry". The Shaikh instructed Nathu to release Turab outside the city in order to save him from the infuriated mob anxious to burst upon him.[56]

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56. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 91.

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Chapter VI

CONFLICT WITH MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLUQ

Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351) whose relations with Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya were extremely respectful,[1] developed bitter and acrimonious attitude towards Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. This bitterness was due to a conflict of ideals; both of them holding fast to their interpretation of mutual relationship between state and religion.

The Muslim mystics of the early middle ages, particularly those belonging to the Chishti *silsilah*, had cut themselves off completely from kings, politics and *shughl* (government service).[2] Several ideological and pragmatic considerations led to this approach. First, government service, they believed, weaned them away from the *summun bonum* of their life which was "living for the Lord alone". Gnosis (*ma'rifat)* was beyond the reach of one who spent his time in *shughl*. The days when government service was tantamount to service of religion were dead and gone. It was now a service of class-interests and to all intents and purposes amounted to signing one's own spiritual death-warrant. Secondly, as Imam Ghazzali puts it in his *Ihya-u'l-'Ulum* : "..... the whole or almost the whole of the income of a Sultan is derived from prohibited sources. The permitted income is only *sadaqat, fay,* and *ghanimat.*[3] But they do not exist these days. Only the *jiziya* remains but its realization is through such cruel means that it does not remain permitted". Consequently, all services subsidized from these sources were illegal and the mystics were not prepared to subsist on any such doubtful source of income. Thirdly, all Muslim political organizations from the fall of the *Khilafat-i-Rashida* to the rise of the Sultanate were

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1. For details, Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya* p. 121

2. See, Nizami, "Early Indo-Muslim Mystics and their attitude towards the State" in *Islamic Culture,* Hyderabad, October 1948 - January 1950.

3. For these terms, Aghnides, *Mohammadan Theories of Finance,* New York 1916.

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essentially secular organizations, and had nothing to do with religion or religious ideals. The entire court-life as also the government organization breathed an atmosphere so alien to the true spirit of Islam that it was impossible to serve the state without detriment to one's spiritual personality. Imam Ghazzali argued that under such circumstances the better alternative was that a man kept away from kings, and did not come face to face with them. According to Imam Ghazzali it was obligatory on a mystic to have the conviction that the cruelty of the rulers deserved to be condemned. "One should neither desire their continuance, nor praise them nor enquire about their affairs, nor keep contact with their associates," he remarked. Fourthly, if a mystic associated himself with the governing class he isolated himself from the main sphere of his activity – the masses. He ceased to be one of them and became part of a bureaucratic machinery. In view of all these facts the Chishti saints firmly advised their disciples: "If you desire to attain the position of great saints do not pay any attention to the princes".[4] True to these traditions of the Chishti *silsilah*, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud also believed in keeping away from the kings and the courts.[5] He used to say that there were two forms of abuse among the mystics: *jirrat* and *muqallid*. "*Muqallid* is one who has no master; *jirrat* is one who visits kings and their courts and asks people for money."[6]

This isolationistic attitude of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din came into clash with Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq's cherished theory that 'state and religion are twins'.[7] He fiercely combated the view that Muslim saints and divines had nothing to do with the state.[8] Throughout his reign he strove to make religious classes a part of his administrative machinery[9] and used their influence to mobilize public opinion in favour of his several radical projects. The Chishti

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4. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 75.

5. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 80.

6. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 80.

7. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 196.

8. Ibn Battuta, *Rihla* II, p. 54. See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 333-337.

9. He forced even the sons of his *pir* – Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din of Ajodhan – to take up government service. *The Life and Times of Shaikh Farid-Ganj-i Shakar*, p. 63; *Idem, Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 348-349.

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mystics, of whom Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was the most outstanding, thought that the Sultan was crossing the Rubicon and overstepping the jurisdiction of his authority in interfering in a sphere which had hitherto remained sacrosant. The Sultan construed this as an act of treason and defiance. He went into rage when he found the mystics adamant in falling in line with his policies. A conflict inevitably followed. It is indeed strange that Muhammad bin Tughluq who had been in close touch from his early years with Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya and had been the *murid* of a saint like Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din of Ajodhan[10], suddenly developed such an aggressive attitude and made a claim which, he must have known, the great mystic could not admit. He could not have been ignorant of the mystic concept of *walayat* which made it a duty of the spiritual master to assign territories for the spiritual activities of a disciple.[11] He allowed his idealism to blind him to all realities and he thoughtlessly embittered his relations with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, who, following the tradition of his great master, earnestly desired to eschew politics and pass his life attending to the problems of the spiritually starved people.

Barani has pointed out that under the influence of philosophers Muhammad bin Tughluq had begun to entertain unorthodox and heretical ideas. In his apocryphal *Autobiography* the Sultan is made to confess that at one stage in his intellectual adventures he had lost faith in the basic religious postulates.[12] Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz has supplied some interesting details in this connection. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud's nephew Maulana Kamal-u'd-din, who later became known as *Allama* on account of his erudition and learning, was reading *Bazdawi* with Qazi Shams-u'd-din, brother of Qutlugh Khan. At midnight Qutlugh was unexpectedly summoned by the Sultan. When he reached the court,

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10. Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din was so seclusion-loving that he never stepped out of his *khanqah* except for Friday prayers. His continuous fasts, prayers, vigils and penitences have been praised by Amir Khusrau, Mir Khurd, Barani and others. His fame had travelled upto Alexandria. For biographical notices, see *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 193-196. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 347, *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi* (MS) p. 170; *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 94-95. See also Nizami, *The Life and Times of Shaikh Farid Ganj-i Shakar*, pp. 61-62.

11. See Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India during the thirteen century*, pp. 1756-177.

12. For details, Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 327-328.

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he found the Sultan sitting in darkness, with his face away from the candle. He asked Qutlugh: 'If anybody appears today and says that 'Muhamamd (Peace be on him) was not the Prophet but he is, how will you charge him guilty?" Qutlugh Khan knew that argument with him was futile, he therefore approached the matter from a different angle and submitted that the wretched person who made such claim in a dominion where the Sultan's prestige was beyond measure, he would be hacked to pieces by even the cooks. The Sultan was dumb – founded.[13] Such incidents when reported to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud must have caused deep distress to him, notwithstanding the fact that the Sultan was being grossly misunderstood and misinterpreted.[14]

Mir Khurd gives the following account of a crucial meeting of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din with the Sultan:

> "In those days when Sultan Muhammad Tughluq sent the people to Deogir and was (also) anxious to conquer Turkistan and Khurasan and wanted to overthrow the descendants of Chengiz Khan, he summoned all the elite and grandees of Delhi and her neighbourhood. A big tent (*bargah*) was pitched and a pulpit was placed on which the Sultan was to sit in order to exhort people to carry *jihad* against the *kuffar* (Mongols). So, on that day he summoned Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din, Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Dabir who was one of the sincere and devoted disciple of the Sultan-u'l-Mashaikh ..... and was a pupil of Maulana Fakhr-u'l-Millat wa'd-Din Zarradi, wanted to conduct him first (to the presence of the Sultan) before others got in. But the Maulana who was reluctant in meeting the Sultan said several times: "I see my head rolling (in dust) before the palace (*sarai*) of this fellow (Sultan). I will not treat him gently and he will not spare me alive". However, when the Maulana approached to meet the Sultan, Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Dabir carried his shoes behind him and keeping them in his armpit stood there (in the court) like servants. The Sultan saw this but did not utter anything at that time. He (the Sultan) began talking to Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din and said:

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13. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 175.

14. See, Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, pp. 333-349; also Nizami: 'The Impact of Ibn Taimiyya on South Asia', in *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Oxford I 1990, pp. 125-134.

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"I want to overthrow the descendants of Chengiz Khan. You should cooperate with me in this work". The Maulana replied: "*Insha-Allah* (God-willing)". The Sultan said: "This term indicates indecision". "This is used for a work to be done in future", replied the Maulana. The Sultan writhed in fury on hearing this reply of the Maulana and said: "Give me some advice so that I may act upon it". The Maulana replied: 'Get rid of this anger'. 'Which anger', asked the Sultan. The Maulana replied: 'Beastly anger'. The Sultan got enraged at this reply and signs of anger became visible on his face. But he said nothing and ordered the mid-day meal to be served. The Maulana and the Sultan began to partake of the food in the same dish. Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi was so annoyed at this that the Sultan also realized that he did not like taking food with him, and in order to add to his feelings of resentment, the Sultan kept on severing the meat from the bones and passing it on to the Maulana who (on his part) ate very little and very reluctantly. The meal being over, Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud were brought before (the Sultan). There are two reports about this matter. One version says that when these saints arrived (at the court) Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din gave to Maulana Shams-u'd-din a place higher than his own. Maulana Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud sat next, and below him sat Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din. The second version is that on one side Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya and Maulana Nasir-u'd-din took their seats and on the other side sat Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi. The first version is correct because it is given by Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Dabir who was (himself) present in that meeting. At the time of their departure robes and bags of silver were brought for these saints. Every one took his robe and the bag in his hand and left after paying proper compliments but, before the bag of silver (coins) and the robe could be given to Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din, Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din took in his own hands the robe and the bag ....."[15]

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15. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 271-273.
Maulana Jamali (*Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, pp. 95-96) has attributed to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud the discussion which took place between the Sultan and Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi. Prof. Habib has accepted Jamali's version (*Islamic Culture*, XX/2 April, 1946 pp. 140-141) but I am not inclined to prefer Jamali's account to that of Amir Khurd. First, because Jamali himself cites Mir Khurd as his authority for this incident but by a curious error of omission or commission quotes him wrongly. Secondly, as a contemporary writer Mir Khurd deserves greater credence. Jamali has substituted the name of Nizam Dahir for Qutb-u'd-din. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat* (MS pp. 308-310) follows *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*,.

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This meeting ended in an atmosphere of unpleasantness, no doubt, but Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din does not seem to have been directly invovled in the acrimonious discussion which took place between the Sultan and Shaikh Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi.

However this meeting makes abundantly clear the aims and objectives of the Sultan. Influenced by the ideas of Ibn Taimiyya he wanted to carry on a relentless struggle against the Mongols who had torn to pieces the social and political fabric of Muslim life. He was anxious to involve the *sufis* in the implementation of his different projects and programmes. Significantly enough he treated the Mongols who had settled in India with extreme generosity and punished those who quarrelled with them.[16]

What was Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's attitude towards the exodus of Muslim scholars and divines to Daulatabad as demanded by the Tughluq Sultan? Our medieval records do not supply any information on this point, but Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din does not seem to have left Delhi which his master, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, had committed to his care. There are some oblique references to Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq in the conversations of the Shaikh as narrated by Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz. Once he said:[17]

شخصی بر بادشاهی در آمد، اعتقاد بادشاه بر صوفیان فاسد کرد ـ
بادشاه فرمود که ایشان طائفه اند که ما را با ایشان کاری نه،
و ایشان را با ما تعلقی نه، بگوئید که از شهر ما بروں شوند

(A man got into the (confidence) of a king. He rendered putrid the king's faith in the Sufis. The king said: 'These are people with whom we have nothing to do. Nor have they anything to do with us. Tell them to get out of our city.'

The story then adopts a miracle-complexion, but this much part neatly represents the situation as it developed during the time of

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16. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 249.
مال مغل و ایام سلطان محمد بود ـ از هر کسی که مغلان
گله کنند بی تامل او را می کشد
The story (pp. 249-250) is interesting.

17. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 153.

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Muhammad bin Tughluq. In all probability it was Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's refusal to go to Daulatabad which embittered the Sultan against him. The Sultan then started harassing him. Contemporary writers have given no details of this harassment. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz did not mention the detail before his audience because its recaptitulation was too painful for him.[18] Muhammad Bihamid Khani writes:[19]

> "As Muhammad bin Tughluq was a tyrannical and oppressive king, he inflicted injuries on the religious minded saint both through tongue and action. But the saint never heaved even a sigh of pain and never prayed to God for the destruction of the foundation of his power. For a very long time he bore (patiently) these tortures".

Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq Muhaddith has expressed his surprise, mixed with pain, at the insolence of the Sultan in annoying a saint of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's stature and piety. According to him the Sultan used to take him forcibly on his journeys.[20] Once the Sultan sent some food to him in gold and silver plates. The idea was that if the Shaikh partook food it would give him a chance to ask him as to why did he do an illegal thing.[21] If he refused to accept, he could be tortured for an act of disobedience. The Shaikh disappointed the Sultan by taking out some pickle from the plate placing it on a piece of bread and then eating it.[22] Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq says that the Sultan had appointed the Shaikh as his *jamadar* (incharge of the wardrobe) and that he bore all these humiliations in deference to the instructions his master had left for him.[23]

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18. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 106.

19. *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, Rotograph of Manuscript in British Museum f. 149b.

20. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.

21. The use of gold and silver vessels is forbidden in Islamic law. Firuz Shah banned their use in the palace, *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 13.

22. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 333, *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.

23. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.
It appears from *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, (p. 106) that the Shaikh was forced by the Sultan to accept 80 *tankas* for daily food. The Shaikh never spent a *jital* from it on his *langar* but deeply distressed at it stopped offering prayer of thanks to God after meals.

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'Abdul Wahid Bilgrami says that the Sultan who had assigned different duties of personal service *(khidmat)* to many saints, allocated some work to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din also. The Shaikh did not like it and so he very humbly expressed his regrets to the Sultan who flared up with rage when he found the Shaikh adamant in carrying out his orders. According to Bilgrami:

> 'He (the Sultan) ordered (them) to make holes in his collar-bones and tie them with strong ropes. He told them to tie these ropes at some height and keep him hanging'. At last the saint submitted and agreed to perform the duty of clothing the Sultan.'[24]

Ferishta says:

> "Having developed an attitude of aversion towards the *dervishes* he (Muhammad bin Tughluq) ordered them to serve him like servants. (He told them): 'One of you should serve betels to me, the other should tie (my) turban'. In short, he assigned duties to many saints and entrusted Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Awadhi known as *Chiragh-i-Dehli*, with the duty of clothing him. The Shaikh did not accept this. Matters took a serious turn. The Sultan gave a blow on his nap and imprisoned him. (Afterwards) the Shaikh thought of the advice of his *pir*, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Willy nilly he accepted that service and got rid of the prison."[25]

No contemporary or even semi-contemporary writer has referred to this incident which, it appears, is a later fabrication. 'Abdur Rahman Chishti and Muhammad Bulaq Chishti have categorically rejected this account as "bazar gossip".[26] The element of surrender by the Shaikh in the story is against the very grain of the Shaikh. He could be tortured to death but could not yield in this way.

The accounts of 'Abdul Wahid Bilgrami and Ferishta are based on rumours which they found floating down the stream of time and

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24. *Saba' Sanabil*, pp. 64-65.

25. *Ferishta*, II, P. 399.

26. *Mir'at-u'l-Asrar* (MS), *Matlub-u't-Talibin* (MS).

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are unworthy of credence. It cannot, however, be denied that the way Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was treated and harassed by the Sultan was widely resented in the mystic circles of the country, from Delhi to Daulatabad.[27] When Shaikh Burhan-u'd-din Gharib heard about the insolent treatment of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din by the Sultan, he bitterly wept and said: "What to do! Khwand Maulana Mahmud is so gentle and forgiving. If he so wishes, the earth would swallow him (the Sultan), his entire army, people, horses and elephants and would not belch (yet remain unsatisfied)."[28] He wrote a letter to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din sympathising with him in his misfortune and praising his patience and forbearance. At the top of this letter there was the following quatrain:[29]

تا بر سر عاشقان بلائی نرسد آوازهٔ عشق شان بجائی نرسد
رو بر سر کنگره سر مردان بین تا مردان را خار بپائی نرسد

(So long as some calamity does not visit the lovers, the fame of their love does not reach (the ears of) the beloved. Go and behold the heads of brave men fixed on turrets; not a thorn pricks the feet of the coward.)

It is said that despite all the tortures to which he was subjected, the Shaikh refused to curse Muhammad bin Tughluq and, living up to the highest traditions of medieval mysticisim, wrote back to his friends that it was easier for him to undergo persecutions than to have ill-will towards anybody.[30] According to 'Abdul Wahid Bilgrami the Shaikh had written the following Persian couplet in reply.[31]

چوں حوالتهای ایں ضربت زجای دیگر است
ننگم آید گر بگویم کز فلاں رنجیده ام

(As the source of these thrashings and tortures is different (from what people think), I feel ashamed in saying that I am agggrieved with such and such a person).

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27. *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, f. 149b.

28. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 240.

29. Ibid, p. 420.

30. *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, f. 149b.

31. *Saba' Sanabil*, p. 64.

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The impression that Muhamamd bin Tughluq assigned duties of personal service to the saints is based on a misunderstanding which has been sustained by a wrong interpretation of the following statement of Ibn Battuta:[32]

فلما ولى السلطان محمد أراد أن يخدم الشيخ فى بعض خدمته،
فإن عادته أن يخدم الفقهاء و المشايخ و الصلحاء، محتجا
أن الصدر الأول رضى الله عنهم لم يكونوا يستعملون
إلا أهل العلم و الصلاح

(When Sultan Muhammad ascended the throne he intended to employ the Shaikh (Shihab-u'd-din) in some capacity, as it was his habit to employ the jurists, sufis and men of probity, contending that the first Muslim rulers – may the peace of God be upon them[33] – had employed only men of learning and probity).

An analysis of this statement of Ibn Battuta in the light of the information supplied by Mir Khurd in his *Siyar-u'l-Auliya* leads to the conclusion that the work assigned to the saints and 'ulama was missionary and administrative in character.[34] The Sultan's contention was that the pious Caliphs had likewise employed men of learning and probity. Obviously they had employed religious men not for personal service but for administrative and missionary work. Mir Khurd refers to nine[35] saints who were ordered by the Sultan to ac-

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32. *Rihla*, II, p. 54.

33. The phrase used is رضى الله عنهم which is generally used for the Companions of the Prophet. Mehdi Husain (p. 86), has inaccurately translated it as 'the first Muslim rulers'. The Urdu translator has adhered to the real connotation and translated it as *Khulafa-i-Rashidin, ('Aja'ib-u'l-Asfar*, Vol. II, p. 15).

34. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din one day told his audience that Caliph 'Umar refused to appoint a man as governor because he had not read the *Qur'an*. See *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 23-24, 133.
Imam Abu Yusuf says:" It was the practice of Hazrat 'Umar that when any army was dispatched he deputed an officer who was always a scholar and a *faqih'*. *Kitab-u'l-Kharaj*, p. 120. Shah Waliullah writes: "And no one excepting a *mujtahid* (leading scholar) was entrusted with the work of *qada* and *fatwa*" *Hujjatullah-il Baligha*, p. 32.

35. Shaikh Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi (*Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 271) Shaikh Sham-u'd-din Yahya (p. 228), Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar (pp. 250-51), Khwaja Karim-u'd-din Samarqandi (p. 307), Syed Qutb-u'd-din Husain Kirmani (p. 218), Syed Kamal-u'd-din (p. 215), Shaikh Mu'izz-u'd-din (p. 196), Shaikh 'Ilm-u'd-din (p. 197) and Shaikh Mazhar-u'd-din (p. 197).

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cept government service under him. The nature of their work was clearly indicated in some cases. He asked Maulana Fakhr-u'd-din Zarradi to cooperate with him in his schemes to crush the Mongols;[36] he exhorted Shaikh Shams-u'd-din Yahya to go to Kashmir and propagate Islam[37] there; he told Syed Kamal-u'd-din[38] that he wanted to take his advice in state matters (*umur-i-mumlakat*).[39] The Sultan conferred the title of *Shaikh-u'l-Islam* on Khwaja Karim-u'd-din Samarqandi[40] and sent him to Satgaon.[41] Referring to the refusal of Syed Qutb-u'd-din Husain Kirmani[42] to accept government service, Mir Khurd says that the Sultan used to force the mystics to give up their mystic dress[43] and accept the life of *shughl*.[44] Shaikh Mu'izz-u'd-din, son of Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din Ajodhani, spiritual mentor of Muhamamd bin Tughluq, was called from Ajodhan and was sent to Gujarat, obviously for some administrative work because there he was killed by the rebels.[45] Shaikh 'Ilm-u'd-din, brother of Mu'izz-u'd-din was appointed *Shaikh- u'l-Islam-i-Mumlakat-i-Hindustan*.[46] His son was also given this title after his death.[47] Ibn Battuta refers to a saint, Shaikh

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36. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 271.

37. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 228.

38. He was the uncle of Mir Khurd and was brought up in the company of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Muhammad bin Tughluq had thrown him into the Bhaksi prison, but was later released and brought to the court. He went to the Sultan in his mystic dress. The Sultan objected to his dress, but bestowed great honours on him. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 215.

39. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 215.

40. For brief biographical notice, see *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 306-308.

41. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 307.

42. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 218.

43. For the dress of various classes of people in India during the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq, see *Subh-al-A'sha*, Eng. translation, *An Arab Account of India in the 14th Century*, O. Spies, pp. 69-71.

44. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 218.

45. Ibid, p. 196.

46. Ibid, p. 197.

47. Ibid, p. 197.

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Shihab-u'd-din, who, in the beginning, refused to accept any service under the Sultan and was punished for his refusal, but later, when he consented to perform service, was given charge of the *diwan al-mustakhraj*[48], department for the realization of revenue arrears.[49]

Thus, it is clear that the Sultan's intention was to engage these saints in administrative work. This policy was in direct conflict with the Chishti attitude towards *shughl*. As the supreme head of the Chishti *silsilah* in India, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din tried to uphold the traditions of his *silsilah* and suffered for them.

In 1349 Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq proceeded from Gujarat to Thatta chasing the rebel Taghi. In the course of his journey he fell ill at Gondal. He, however, continued large scale preparations for a final reckoning with Taghi. During his stay at Gondal he summoned from Delhi some leading scholars, *'ulama, mashaikh*, nobles and their *harems*.[50] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was one of those saints who were called to Gondal.[51]

Why did the Sultan call Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din to Gondal along with so many other scholars? Hagiologists reveal only this much that the Sultan was angry with him.[52] Barani keeps silent on this

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48. *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughluq*, pp. 219-221.

49. *Rihla*, II, p. 54; Tr. p. 87.

50. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 523.

51. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*,, p. 246. Mir Khurd writes: "And from there he summoned to his presence Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud along with the *'ulama* and the elders of (Delhi)". Mir Husayni, an eminent disciple of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, however, writes: "Muhammad bin Tughluq had forcibly taken him (to Sind), (*Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, p. 117). 'Afif says: "Sultan Muhammad had taken Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud to Thatta along with him" (*Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 29,82). These apparent contradictions in the statements of contemporary authorities may be reconciled if we keep in mind the fact that the Sultan had called him to Gondal and from there he had taken him to Thatta. The statement of *Jawami'-u'l-'Ulum* that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din did not complete his journey and returned from the way is incorrect.

52. *Jama'-u'l-Ulum*, pp. 359-360; *Gulzar-i-Abrar*, MS. While on his way to Thatta, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din stayed at Narnaul and prayed at the tomb of Shaikh Muhammad Turk Narnauli, *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 47. It appears from *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah* (p.46), that the Shaikh had a halt at Multan and the Sultan was also with him.

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point. Badaoni[53], however, says that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din had installed Firuz as king during the absence of Muhammad bin Tughluq. The Sultan came to know about it during his stay at Gondal, and issued orders for the arrest of Firuz and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din. When the prisoners reached the suburbs of Thatta, the Sultan ordered their execution. Before his orders could be carried out, the Sultan breathed his last. Badaoni's account is not corroborated by any contemporary or semi-contemporary authority. Badaoni's statement is incredible for the following reasons: Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din as we know him, could not possibly go to this length and behave like a rebel. It was against the traditions of his *silsilah* as well as against his own temperament. His appeal to Firuz to ascend the throne after the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq cannot be cited as an example of his interest in political matters. The circumstances under which he joined the army, the scholars and the nobles in requesting Firuz to ascend the throne in Sind were abnormal. Besides, had it been a fact, contemporary writes would not have failed to refer to it. Firuz was the testamentary legatee of Sultan Muhammad and so he could not take up that attitude against the Sultan.

After the death of the Sultan people asked Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din: "The Sultan persecuted you so much. What was the reason for this?" The saint replied: "There was a dilemma between me and God, the Glorious and the Most High. They settled it like this".[54] A man with such an attitude of mind could have hardly thought of a *coup* to overthrow the Sultan.

Unfortunately we have no *malfuz* of the Shaikh pertaining to the period of Muhammad bin Tughluq. It would have given us an idea of his mental and physical condition during those days of dis-

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53. *Muntakhab-u't-Tawarikh*, I, p. 242.

54. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*,, p. 246. Mir Khurd has given a long story to bring out the significance of this remark. What the Shaikh really meant was that what Muhammad bin Tughluq did with him was a God-sent punishment for some lapse of his.

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tress and torture. The *Khair-u'l-Majalis* was compiled three years after the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq. An atmosphere of gloom and frustration lingers on in its pages. No doubt the storm had subsided but it had damaged and dislocated life all around.

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Chapter VII

RELATIONS WITH FIRUZ SHAH TUGHLUQ

The death of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq at Thatta plunged the entire camp into confusion and a feeling of despair seized the leaders of the army and created panic in the hearts of the rank and file.[1] Away from the capital, surrounded by enemies, open and secret, it was an explosive political situation which had to be tackled with vision and vigour. At this critical juncture Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud and some other leading men called upon Firuz and requested him to ascend the throne.[2] The Shaikh's presence at the coronation ceremony did not mean that he was now prepared to involve himself in the political affairs of the Empire. Far from that. A reign of terror had just ended and the Shaikh breathed a sigh of relief at it. Now the peaceful atmosphere of the *khanqahs* would not be disturbed by couriers from the court. The Shaikh sent a message to Firuz asking him whether he would treat the people with justice and equity or should he pray to God for some other king. Firuz promised to behave justly and the Shaikh prayed for him.[3]

It is said that when Firuz Shah's army reached Sarsuti, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud sent a message to him saying that from Thatta to Sarsuti, he had prayed to God for the safety of his cortege. Onwards from that place it was the *walayat* of Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar. He should approach him for his spiritual help. On reaching Hansi Firuz Shah wrote to Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar for his blessings. He replied:[4]

چوں خدمت برادرم شیخ نصیرالدین حواله بریں
ضعیف کرده امید از کرم الله تبارك و تعالی ایں
دارم که دهلی هم بر شما خواهد آمد

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1. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 526.

2. Barani, p. 536; see also *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 592.

3. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 29.
'Afif further says that the Shaikh had sent to him thirty nine dates indicative of the period he was to occupy the throne.

4. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 61-62.

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(As my brother Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din has assigned the work to my humble self, I hope from the mercy of God that Delhi also will come under your jurisdiction).

According to Ja'far Makki, when Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din reached the suburbs of Hansi, Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar thought of coming out to receive him but the Shaikh sent a message to him through his servant Bashir to remain in the *khanqah* so that he could visit him there and following him the Sultan also could come and receive his blessings.[5]

Yahya Sirhindi informs us that when Khwaja Jahan heard about the swift and successful march of Firuz from Sind to Delhi, he sent Syed Jalal-u'd-din Kirmati, Malik Dilan, Maulana Najm-u'd-din Razi and his slave's son, Dau'd[6], to him and offered either deputyship of the Empire or some territory for exercise of independent authority. Firuz convened a consultative meeting to which Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh, Maulana Kamal-u'd-din Samani and Maulana Shams-u'd-din Bakharzi were invited. Firuz addressed the meeting and it was decided to detain Syed Jalal-u'd-din Kirmati and Maulana Najm-u'd-din Razi. The slave boy was sent back with a message to Khwaja Jahan to give up his recalcitrant attitude and submit.[7]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was never again seen in the court or the camp. He desired a free *khanqah-life*, that being ensured after a long struggle with the state, he retired to his hospice.

Firuz Shah had great faith in the mystics of his day.[8] Besides, he wanted to make amends for the unwise policy of his predecessor. He must have, therefore, tried to establish cordial relations with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud also. But, the Shaikh does not seem to have reciprocated his gestures.[9] One day the Sultan came to the

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5. *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, pp. 117-118.

6. Curiously the English translator of *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, (p. 121) renders داؤد مولا زادۂ خود as "his own Maulana Zadah"!

7. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, pp. 121-122.

8. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 558-560; *Fuluhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p.21. See also, Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 402 et seq.

9. In the list of those leading saints of the age on whom the Sultan showered his gifts the name of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din does not occur. Barani, p. 579-80.

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khanqah to see the Shaikh. As he himself says in the *Futuhat,* his conviction was نعم الامير لباب الفقير (Most excellent is the king who comes to the door of a faqir).[10] The saint was having his mid-day nap, and Maulana Zain-u'd-din also was not there. The Sultan was still in the courtyard of the *khanqah* when it began to rain. Soon afterwards Maulana Zain-u'd-din arrived and informed the Shaikh about the royal visitor. The Shaikh woke up but, instead of going out to receive the Sultan, performed ablutions and began to offer prayers. The Sultan, who was waiting outside, got annoyed and turning towards Tatar Khan said: "We are not king. They (pointing to the saint) are real kings." When the Shaikh came out of his room, a carpet *(shatranji)* was spread on which the Sultan sat for a while and then left, rather displeased.[11]

It would, however, he unfair to think that the Shaikh was in any way, ill-disposed towards Firuz. The *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* no doubt, refers to rising prices, scarcity of essential goods, and worries of the common people during the reign of Firuz Shah Tughluq. But only 3 years had passed since Firuz had ascended the throne and he could not be blamed for trends which had started and developed during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq. It was Muhammad bin Tughluq whose policies, particularly his higher imperalism which included his Khorasan and Qarachil expeditions, had created inflation and economic distress. Firuz Shah had inherited all these problems from him and he cannot be blamed for it. In fact the policies initiated by Firuz in the years that followed – particularly his agricultural and irrigational measures – brought peace and prosperity to the people. However, all this happened after Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din. The Shaikh's mind was never free from a feeling of contrast with the 'Alai period when the basic necessities of life were cheaper and even the beggars were well-off. It was not his disillusionment of Firuz but his principle of keeping aloof from the state that we find him at a distance from Firuz. Professor Muhammad Habib's remark that: "A person who spoke so fearlessly could hardly have been in touch with the Sultan and the bureaucracy",[12] is correct but it does not mean distrust or disillusionment of the Sultan. In fact we find him showing goodwill to Firuz. When the Sultan

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10. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi,* p. 21.

11. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim,* p. 219.

12. *Islamic Culture,* XX/2, April 1946.

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started for Jajnagar, some astrologers and sooth-sayers of Delhi circulated the rumour that the Sultan would not return alive from his expedition. When Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh came to know about this, he made enquiries from Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz. He then sent a message to Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul, who was his *murid*, to contact the Sultan and tell him to put four *maunds* of baked bread under his bed every night and distribute it to the needy and the poor next morning.[13] No one not interested in the safety of the Sultan could have sent that message.

According to Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz,Firuz Khan, a son of Firuz Shah, came to see the Shaikh with the permission of his father. His tutor *(ataliq)* Hatim, who came with him, was already a disciple of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. The *ataliq* requested the Shaikh to admit the Prince to his discipline. The Shaikh enquired if he had taken the Sultan's permission for this. The *ataliq* made a false statement and replied in the affirmative. The Shaikh then enrolled him as his disciple. The Prince was in love with a woman. On leaving the *Khanqah* he took the woman to some hut and remained there with her for three days and nights. The Sultan was worried about his whereabouts. He sent couriers to the Shaikh to enquire about the missing prince. The Shaikh replied that the prince had been with him in the *Khanqah* for about an hour and that he did not know where he went subsequently. The third day when the prince came out from the hut, the Sultan got the *ataliq* and other companions executed. People spread the rumour that the Prince had obtained an amulet *(ta'wiz)* from the Shaikh for his rise to the throne. The report runs:[14]

گفتند که شیخ نقش داده بود که بادشاه خواهی شد ـ آخر سلطان
بسر این نشد، اغماض کرد ـ ایشان را از کوه تساویس بروں
انداخت و پسر را در مهانه جلا کرد، آخر همانجا زهر داد ـ عرض
داشتی برای خواجه نبشت آری آنکه در حضرت شما بی‌ادبی کند
همیں باید آں بدبختاں سزای خود یافتند، چرب زبانی کرد، بعد
ازاں در خانقاه آرام شد، و گرنه تعلقی بود که در تقریر نیاید

(They said that the Shaikh had given him an amulet and (predicted) that he would become king. The Sultan did not pursue this; he winked at it. He got them thrown from the Tasawin Hill and exiled the Prince to Mahana, and got him

13. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 21.

14. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 220.

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poisoned there. (The Sultan) sent a supplication to the Khwaja stating: 'As these people had shown discourtesy to the saint, these wicked people got the punishment they deserved. They indulged in vain talk'. After this peace returned to the *khanqah,* otherwise there was such concern that it cannot be described).

Having narrated this incident, Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz remarked:[15]

اگر اختلاطی و آمد شدی از آن ایں قوم نباشد
ایں کدورتہا زیادتی چرا بدرویش باز گردد

(If contact with such people (the royalty) is not kept, how can such worries pester a *durwesh.)*

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15. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 220.

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Chapter VIII

LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud survived the attack of Turab but his health gradually went down. Continuous fasts, vigils and penitences broke his frame which had already been weakened by piles, flatulence and other diseases. From early morning till late into the night he had to attend to all sorts of visitors, who brought all sorts of problems to him. He did not get time even for a brief-mid-day rest (*qailulah).* One day he told Hamid Qalandar with tears in his eyes: "Very often I wish to rest at mid-day, but they wake me up and say: a visitor has come. Get up."[1] Over-work combined with fasts and vigils threw his system out of order.[2] Even in the small hours of the morning, when people are usually fresh, one found him completely worn out. Piles[3] and yawning[4] troubled him very often.

In spite of all these troubles and diseases, the Shaikh meticulously followed his daily programme (*zabitah*). It was only a week before his death that weakness and disease so overpowered him that he failed to carry out his set routine. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz once informed his audience: "Our Khwaja (Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din) retained his *zabitah* till the end; but one night when I was offering *tarawih* prayers, with Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Bijlauri standing between me and the Shaikh, I saw that in two or three genuflexions he (the Khwaja) bowed only once. I felt very sorry on this (omission) and said (to myself): (The Shaikh's) *zabitah* has gone. It happened on a Wednesday night. From Thursday morning his ailment began. The next Thursday night he expired. During this illnes there was no *zabitah* at all. He simply pointed by movements for ablutions *(wuzu)* and said: "Bring water. I shall perform *wuzu*". He started his prayers and said (only): *"Allah-O-Akbar".* He remained in this condition throughout the day and throughout the

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1. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 60.
2. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 257.
3. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim,* p. 61.
4. Ibid, p. 30.

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night. On Monday, when he held his last *majlis*, he addressed the audience with quiet confidence.

According to Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz[5]

بداں ضابطه و هوشیاری سخن میگفت که هیچ وهم
بے ضبطی کسی را نبود، بحدیکه ایں حدیث خواند

ان الرجل لیجب ان یکون توبه حسناً و فعله حسنةً

[He spoke with such coherence and alertness (at that meeting) that no one could even sense about the disruption in routine that was to follow. He even recited a *Hadith* meaning: *"It is incumbent on man to be sincerely repentant and perform good acts"*].

He did not hold any other *majlis* after that. On the fourth day he expired.

In his *Sharh Fiqh-i-Akbar*, Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz thus refers to the last illness and death of the Shaikh:

خواجهٔ من شیخ نصیرالدین محمود دراں سال که نقل خواهد
فرمود یك روزی خواهر بزرگ را که پانزده سال ازو بزرگ بود،
او را طلبید، بپرسید که عمر من چه قدر شد، گفت هشتاد و
دو سال، فرمود آه بسیار شد، اکنوں اختیار رفتن باید کرد -
منقریب زحمت طاعون آغاز شد - هفت روز زیست بعد از هفت
روز جان عزیز را به حضرت سپرد[6]

'My spiritual master Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud one day, in the last year of his life, called his elder sister who was fifteen years elder to him, and asked: 'How much is my age?' She replied: 'Eighty two years'. 'Ah! It has become too much. I should now get ready to depart', he said. Soon afterwards (the disease of) plague began. He survived for seven days. After the seventh day he surrendered his dear life to God.'[6]

The Shaikh breathed his last on 18 Ramazan 757[7]/14 September 1356.

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5. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, pp. 82-83.

6. *Sharh Fiqh-i-Akbar*, p. 45.
From *Khair-u'l-Majalis* (p. 284) it appears that the elder sister had died in Awadh!

7. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 242, 247.

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His death was widely mourned. Mutahhar says:[8]

جهان بماتم خواجه نصیر دین محمود
هزار گونه فغان کرد و نوحه و زاری

(The world 'raised' thousands of lamentations and wailings at the death of Khwaja Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud)

Outside India also the death of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud was mourned in religious circles. In Medina his funeral prayer was offered in absentia *(gha'ibana)* and was attended by men like Shaikh-i-Medina, 'Abdullah Mutri.[9] The Shaikh was buried in his own house at a place which he had selected some years back.[10] He had instructed his disciples to bury with him the articles of mystic regalia received from his master. Accordingly, the *khirqah* (patched frock) was placed on his breast, the staff (*asa*) was laid by his side, the rosary (*tasbih*) was wound around his forefinger, the wooden bowl[11] was placed under his head and the wooden sandals of his master were put by his side. Sayyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz washed his body.[12]

Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz told his audience one day that somebody saw Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud in his dream after his death and enquired about the treatment meted out to him by God. "But for my prayers in my early years", he replied, "I would have been in great difficulty".[13]

اگر عبادت اول ایام ما نبودی حال ما نیك بشوار بودی

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8. *Oriental College Magazine*, May 1935, p. 124.

9. *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*, p. 89.

10. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 247.

11. The use of wooden bowl was considered effective in reducing diet. It was a practice borrowed from yogis. *Khatimah* p. 18.

12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 287; *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p. 97.

13. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 272.

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The Tomb

According to Sir Syed the dome under which the Shaikh lies buried was constructed by Firuz Shah Tughluq in 749/1348 during the life-time of the Shaikh.[14] It is, however, surprising that the Sultan makes no reference to it in his *Futuhat*. However the gateway to the Dargah was constructed by him in 775/1373. The inscription on it runs as follows:

بسم الله تیمناً بذکره
عمارة ایں گنبد در عهد همایوں الواثق بالله ابوالمظفر فیروز شاه
سلطان خلد الله تعالی ملکه سال هفصد هفتاد و پنج از تاریخ هجرت
رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم بود

(In the name of God. Auspicious is the mention of His name. The building of this glorious dome was completed in the reign of ....., Abu Muzaffar Firuz Shah, Sultan, may God perpetuate his kingdom, in the year 775, date of the Hijrat of the Prophet of God, on whom be God's blessing).

Additions to this building-complex were made at different times by several persons, including Muhammad Shah.

Carr Stephen gives the following details about the tomb of the Shaikh:

"The tomb of Chiragh Delhi stands within an irregularly built oblong enclosure of 180 feet by 104, the walls having an average height of 12 feet. The greater portion of this enclosure was built by the Emperor Muhammad Shah in the year 1142 A.H. (1729 A.D.), its main entrance which was built 12 years after the death of Chiragh Delhi, is on its north-eastern corner. It is a domed gateway of stone and masonry, with an arched door, over which is an inscription on white marble. The room of the gateway is 31 feet square exterior, and inside about 19 feet square, with masonry *chabutrahs*, about 2 1/2 feet high, on either side. From the ground to its embattled roof the tomb is about 27 feet high and the dome stands about 15 feet from the roof, thus making the whole height of the tomb about 42 feet. The parapet over the door is flanked by two small masonry minarets.

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14. *Athar-u's-Sanadid*, ed. Moin-ul-Haq, p. 19.

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"About 35 feet to the north-west of the gateway is the tomb of Chiragh Delhi. It is a single room, about 30 feet square and 40 feet high, and surmounted by a masonry dome with a gilt pinnacle; on each corner of the roof there is a slim, eight feet high minaret; the roof is protected by plain parapet; under the parapet is a deep stone weathering, which was built by one Khwajah Muhammad Khan. Underneath the weathering there are twelve arched openings, three on each side supported by twelve red-stone pillars; with the exception of the door, which is in the middle arch on the south, the rest of the arches are covered with pierced screens of red sand-stone. Inside the room is the grave of Chiragh Delhi, surrounded by a dwarf railing. Under the dome an inverted gilt cup is suspended over the grave. To the west of the tomb is a mosque, and in a room in the north-western corner of the enclosure is the wooden seat which was offered to the shrine by one Dakhni Beg; it is 7 feet long, 4 feet wide and 3 feet high; it is cut out of one piece of wood, is elaborately carved and bears the following inscription:

"God is Great:
This throne of wood is an offering made by Dakhni,
To the worthy Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.
May God purify his cherished secrets, 1143 Hijri.
In the 12th year of the reign of Muhammad Shah Ghazi".

Prince Ghulam Hayder, son of Akbar Shah II, built a verandah round the tomb of Chiragh Delhi, but it fell in shortly after its completion."[15]

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15. Carr Stephen, *The Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi*, (Ludhiana, 1876), pp. 145-146.
See also, Sir Syed, *Athar-u's-Sanadid*, ed. by Khaliq Anjum, Vol. I, p. 326, Vol. II, pp. 332-333; Bashir-u'd-din *Waqi'at-i-Dar-ul-Hakumat-i-Delhi*, Vol. III, pp. 91-98; M.Ara, *Dargahs in Medieval India*, Tokyo 1977, plates 25-29.

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Chapter IX

THE SCHOLAR

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh had received thorough instruction in the traditional syllabus of his day and was a recognized *'alim*. Maulana Shams-u'd-din Yahya[1], one of the top scholars of the time, was one of his teachers. The discourses of the Shaikh as recorded by Hamid Qalandar reveal vast range of his knowledge. His lucid exposition of problems brought to him by scholars, students and mystics bear witness to his deep insight in religious sciences. His knowledge of the *Qur'an* was deep and had become a part of his integrated spiritual personality. On crucial matters he always referred to some Qur'anic verse and explained it in such a way that its appositeness to the occasion greatly impressed the audience. He used to say:[2]

قران در دلی فرود آید که دل از لوث معصیت و هوا پاك باشد

(*Qur'an* descends on that heart which is free from sin and lust) His own life illustrates the truth of this observation.

Following the tradition of his master and the Chishti saints of Nagaur, he was particularly inclined towards *Kashshaf*[3] so far as his exigetical studies were concerned. The *Mashariq-ul-Anwar* was a popular work of *Hadith* in those days and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din frequently referred to it in his discourses.[4] His discussion of problems relating to *shari'at* and *sunnah* was mainly based on the Hadith literature. Imam Ghazzali's works, particularly *Ihya-u'l-'Ulum*[5] and *Minhaj-u'l-Abidin*[6] were deeply appreciated by

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1. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 353.
2. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 267.
3. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 65, 83, 120.
4. Ibid, pp. 94, 114, 136, 207.
5. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 68.
6. Ibid, pp. 56, 212.

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him. Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi's *'Awarif-u'l-Ma'arif* was also his favourtie book.[7] He has referred to *Sharh-i-Ta'arruf* also in his discourse,[8] but other mystical works are not referred to by him. On questions of *fiqh* he is found referring to *Hidaya*[9], *Sharh 'Aqida*[10] and *Muqaddamat-u's-Salat*.[11]

He was interested in the poetry of Sana'i, Nizami, Ahmad Jam and Sa'di. The *Masnavi* of Maulana Jalal-u'd-din Rumi has been referred to for the first time in India in his discourses.[12] It is difficult to say how far he was influenced by Rumi, but some discussions in *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, reveal his identity of thought with him. The fact that a number of distinguished scholars of the period – like Maulana Khwajgi, Maulana Ahmad Thanesari, Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani, Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir – joined his discipline shows that his scholarship was recognized in the academic circles of the country.

The Shaikh's anxiety for scholarly exactness is reflected in his supervision and control of Hamid Qalandar's record of his conversations. He glanced through the manuscript several times.[13] He did not want the work to degenerate into a book of miracles or of adulations[14]. "Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din ", he writes, "has so broken his *nafs* (ego) that if I call him a Shaikh, he resents it; if I attribute a miracle to him, he gets angry."[15]

The Shaikh's poetic sensitivity was highly developed. He not only cited apt and spirited verses of others, but could himself com-

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7. Ibid, pp.58, 123, 155, 178, 249.
8. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 207.
9. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 30, 65, 243, 282.
10. Ibid, p. 239.
11. Ibid, p. 29.
12. Ibid, p. 163.
13. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 28.
14. See Nizami, Introduction, *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 5.
15. Supplement, *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 289.

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pose extremely thrilling and emotionally charged verses. The following verses ascribed to him reveal matchless power of expressing delicate mystic sentiments through similes and metaphors:

بی کارم و با کارم چوں مد بحساب اندر
گویانم و خاموشم، چوں خط به کتاب اندر
گه شادم و گه غمگیں از حال خودم غافل
می گریم و می خندم چوں طفل بخواب اندر
در سینه نصیرالدین جز عشق نمی گنجد
ایں طرفه تماشا بیں دریا به حباب اندر

Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz informs us that the following verse of a poet of the city was often recited by the Shaikh:[16]

قلم بشکن ورق سوز و سیاهی ریز و دم در کش
حمید ایں قصهٔ عشق است در دفتر نمی گنجد

May be that the inspiration to compose verses in this rhyme and meter came from this verse.

Once Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz heard the following verses of Auhad-u'd-din Kirmani being recited by him:[17]

گفتم که پیمبری تو یا پیر
گفتا که دوئی ز راه بر گیر
چوں نیك بدیدم ایں نیکو بود
من و پیر و پیامبر هر سه او بود

It appears that the Shaikh's verses were popular in the mystic circles. Shah Mina quotes his following verses:[18]

این ره ما بوی عدم می زند
کیست درین ره که قدم می زند
هر که درین راه مجرد رو است
بر سر کونین علم می زند
در دل محمود اثری نیست زان
لاف محبت به ستم می زند

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16. *Hazair-u'l-Quds*, p. 172.

17. *Khatimah*, p. 48.

18. *Malfuzat-i-Shah Mina*, p. 37.

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Among the disciples of the Shaikh there were a number of poets – like Maulana Mutahhar of Kara, Yusuf Gada and Hamid Qalandar. The Shaikh appreciated good poetry, did not stop his disciples from versification but did not approve their total absorption in it.

One day the Shaikh had some pain in his foot which was swollen. Hamid presented the following quatrain:[19]

آماس که از پای مبارك زاد است زانست که بوسه ها ملائك داد است
با خود ز جهان همیرود بهر وداع درد آمـــده در پای شما افتاد اســت

The Shaikh appreciated these verses.

The Shaikh was particularly impressed by the spiritual and poetical qualities of Shaikh Sa'di, whose verses were liked by Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya also. He found his verses soaked in deep cosmic emotion and placed him higher than Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan. The *Khair-u'l-Majalis* contains his following remark:[20]

امیر خسرو و امیرحسن بسیار خواستند که بطریق خواجه سعدی
بگویند، میسر نشد ـ خواجه سعدی انچه گفت از سر حال گفت

(Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan much desired to emulate Khwaja Sa'di in their poetry, but did not succeed. Whatever Khwaja Sa'di has said is based on cosmic experience.)

The Shaikh's views about knowledge (*'ilm*), as found in *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, reveal his emphasis on combining knowledge with action and precept with example. "Knowledge is not an end in itself; it is not beauty in itself", he used to say.[21] In his own life he illustrated the working of those religious, moral and spiritual concepts which he had derived from his study of the religious literature. The last words that he uttered in his last *majlis* were of a *hadith* in which repentance and good actions have been commended.[22]

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19. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 179.

20. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 143.

21. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 253.

مقصود از علم عمل است، علم حسن لنفسه نیست

22. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, pp. 82-83.

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Chapter X

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

Basic Ethical and Spiritual Ideal

Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq Muhaddith of Delhi with his sharp and penetrating insight into the distinctive role of Muslim saints of medieval India, remarks about Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh:[1]

طریقہ او فقر و صبر و رضا و تسلیم بود

(His (special) way of discipline was *faqr*, contentment, resignation and submission to His Will).

If the nature of his discourses, the pattern of his life and the atmosphere of his *khanqah* is kept in view it would appear that this pithy sentence neatly epitomizes the drift and direction of his mystic activity. He directed his energy towards building up the personalities of his disciples in the light of these basic ideals – rejection of material attractions and life of resignation to the Will of God. He explained these concepts to his audience with frequent references to the lives of earlier saints. The impact of his speech on his followers was beyond measure. As he himself lived the life which he preached to others, there was instant response to his words. Hamid Qalandar has referred to an assembly of the Shaikh in which he talked about the Day of Judgement. The people were so deeply stirred by his oration that they lost all sense of time and place and went into a trance-like state. His own face turned white out of fear.[2]

To his fear of God (*taqwa*) was added the love of His creatures. His concern for the weak and the downtrodden added further to the force of his appeal. Acting upon the advice of his spiritual master he strove hard to bring happiness to the human heart. His own heart

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1. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 80.
   Ghulam Mu'in-u'd-din 'Abdullah quotes this line, without citing Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS Vol. I, p. 121.

2. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 12.

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went out in sympathy to those whom he found suffering physically or mentally. When in Multan, en route to Thatta, a leper asked him for water. He gave a glass of water to him and himself drank whatever remained in the glass, though Syed-ul-Hujjab warned him against it.[3]

The Shaikh believed that one who adopted the mystic path, should develop large-hearted tolerance and generosity in his dealings with all human beings. Retaliation and revenge should be discarded as practice of the animal world. One should bear patiently the sufferings caused by people and should abstain from returning evil with evil.[4] Nothing can be achieved unless the spirit of sacrifice is developed. Self-abnegation as practised by the Companion of the Prophet at the battlefield of Uhud should act as the ideal.[5]

Kindness should be extended to all human beings, irrespective of their caste, colour or creed. Food should be distributed to all and sundry.[6] One should strive to acquire the morals of God who extends His benevolence and kindness to all His creatures without caring if they had faith in Him or not. When the sun rose, it gave light and warmth to all regardless of their wealth, religion or character. When it rained, all people benefitted from it. These are physical manifestations of the moral of God and man should try to emulate them as best as he can.

Quoting Shaikh Abul Qasim Gurgani, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud advised his disciples to strive to imbibe and emulate the 99 Attributes of God.[7] One who imbibed these virtues in his social dealings understood the Divine significance of life better than others. . تخلقوا باخلاق الله (Acquire the morals of God) should be the basis of human relationship in this world.[8] Lest anybody misun-

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3. *Siraj-u'l-Hidaya*, pp. 46-47.

4. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 41,46,177.

5. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 156-157.

6. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 178.

7. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 77.
For elucidation of the significance of these names, see *The Attributes of Divine Perfection*, published by Xenel Industries Ltd., Jeddah 1989.

8. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 107.

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derstood the meaning of imbibing the Attributes of God, he told people that acquiring all these virtues did not mean attaining gnosis.[9] (او هنوز سالك غير واصل باشد)

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh thus narrates the substance of a discourse of his master:

> "One day I was present in the assembly of Sultan u'l-Mashaikh. He said: 'Offering many (genuflexions of) prayers, keeping oneself busy in litanies, observing fasts, or reciting the *Qur'an* is not so difficult. Anybody with courage can do all this, even an old woman can perform such exercises. She can keep fasts, pray at night, read some parts of the *Qur'an*. However the 'men of God' have a different work to perform. Firstly, one should not allow worries concerning food and dress to come near him because a *dervish* who worries for these things cannot achieve the higher objectives of life. Secondly, he should keep himself busy in *zikr* of God, both in private and in company. This is the basis of all penitences. Thirdly, he should never talk to people with a view to attract their hearts towards himself. If he delivers a sermon or gives some piece of advice, he should do so for the sake of God alone. He should not have any personal ambition involved in it and there should be no sign of hypocrisy in it. Sermons and discourses should be inspired by sincerity. When a *dervish* adopts this method, God Almighty, makes all saints of the age, subservient to him."[10]

The entire structure of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's programme of spiritual culture was built on this advice.

Identification with the Problems of the People

A mystic should not behave as if he is somebody different and distinct from others. Apart from breeding an obnoxious sense of superiority, it creates a gulf between him and the people in general. He should mix with people of different temperaments and professions and behave as if he is one of them[11] (با همه خلق همچو خلق باش)

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9. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 77.

10. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 450-451.

11. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 114.

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Honest Living and Livelihood

One should earn his livelihood through strictly honest means.[12] Those in business should be honest in their dealings and should never try to earn profit by uttering lies.[13] Black-marketing and profiteering lead to ruin.[14] If a man holds anything in trust he should be absolutely honest in discharging his obligations.[15] Livelihood honestly earned ensured happiness, satisfaction and goodwill. He used to say: لقمه کسب نیکو لقمه است (morsel earned through effort is a good morsel.)[16]

Selflessness Essential

No human effort can succeed if it is guided by the *nafs* (the lower and the material self). Those who deliver sermons and invite others to path of rectitude and truth should be absolutely selfless. One who takes to preaching, his aim should be neither money nor fame but God alone.[17] This alone can enhance the effectiveness of his activity.

Self Criticism

Those whom God loves are made conscious of their short-comings and defects.[18] Caliph 'Umar used to say: "God's blessings be on the man who apprises 'Umar of his short-comings."[19] One who is overtaken by divine rapture *(jazba)*, all vicious urges and inclinations are wiped out from him.[20]

(آں را که جذبه در می آید اوصاف ذمیمه ازو دور می کند
و او را مخلص می گرداند)

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12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 91-92.
13. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 95.
14. Ibid, pp. 95-96.
15. Ibid, p. 209.
16. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 277.
17. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 31-33.
18. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 235.
19. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 235
20. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 100.

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Three Categories of Men

The Shaikh classified men into three categories: common people *(awam)*, the elect *(khwas)* and the super-elect *(akhas-u'l-khwas)*. This classification was based not on social or intellectual differences, but on spiritual experience. It made spiritual excellence more difficult for the select than the common people. What withheld the vision of God in the case of common people was *sin*; in the case of the elect it was negligence *(ghaflat)* or indulgence in lawful pleasure *(mubahat)*; in the case of the super-elect the veil was *hasanat* (virtues). One belonging to the last category was expected to be superlative in his goodness, for mere goodness meant nothing for him.[21] Thus the Shaikh made the travellers on the mystic path realize that the perimeters to judge their excellence were stricter and harsher than those of the ordinary people.

Human Obligations to God

The Shaikh used to say that man has four obligations towards God and that he should strive to discharge them sincerely and to the best of his ability:

(a) *Haqq-i-Taqwa* i.e. obligation to fear God as he should be feared;
(b) *Haqq-i-Ibadat* i.e. obligation to pray Him as He should be prayed;
(c) *Haqq-i-Tilawat* i.e. obligation to study the *Qur'an* as it should be studied and
(d) *Haqq-i-Ma'rifat* i.e. obligation to strive for attaining gnosis.[22]

The inspiring motive of a man's actions should be to seek the pleasure of God.[23] Divine approval lay in strict adherence to what has been ordained by Him and in total abstention from what He has forbidden.[24]

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21. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 109-110.
22. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 24-25.
23. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 125.
24. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 28.

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Cosmic Emotion and Divine Love

The ideal of social behaviour as laid down by elders can be achieved only be developing cosmic emotion. The *summum bonum* of a mystic's life should be 'to live for the Lord alone'. He should neither hope for Heaven nor fear Hell. His soul should yearn for communion with the Infinite and the Eternal. His love-ridden heart should always declare:

جانان ما را و جان ما جانان را

(The Beloved is mine and my life is for my Beloved).

The way to Divine love passes through misfortunes and hardships.[25] What is required is complete dedication to the ideal because a moment's negligence sometimes throws a man away from his goal.[26] When a man takes to spiritual discipline, he is required to get his head shaved and shorten his sleeves. These are symbolic of his determination to lay down his all in the way of His realization and abstain from stretching hands before others or visiting undesirable places.[27]

Love of God cannot be developed without following the Prophet in thought, in words and in action.[28] Love is of three kinds:

i) *Mahabbat-i-Islami* i.e. love which a new convert to Islam develops for God on account of his conversion to the faith;
ii) *Mahabat-i-Muwahhibi*, i.e. love which a man develops as a result of his effort in the way of following the Prophet, and
iii) *Mahabbat-i-Khas*, i.e. love which is the result of cosmic emotion.

The first is common to all; the second can be developed by the *abrar*[29] alone; the third is exclusively for those near and dear to God.[30]

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25. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 37.

26. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 37.

27. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 65-66.

28. Ibid, p. 27.

29. " But of those who have power to loose and to bind and are the officers of the Divine court there are three hundred, called *akhyar*, and forty called *abdal*, and seven called *abrar*, and four called *awtad*, and three called *nuqaba*, and one, called *qutb* or *ghawth*" — *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, p. 214.

30. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 28.

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When a man's inclination towards God (*inabat*) arises out of his feelings of astonishment or contrition, the source of his inspiration is his heart. If it arises out of love and devotion the source of his inspiration is the inner heart. If after *inabat*, he rejects everything except God, the source of his inspiration is mysterious.[31] This is the highest stage of *inabat*.[32] This is an attribute of prophets and saints *(walis)*.[33]

According to Shah Mina a man once asked Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's Mahmud the way to develop Divine Love. He advised him to recite *Sura al-Nisaa* (S. IV) after the 'Asr prayers.[34]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din told his disciples that the sign of divine love was holding fast to what has been ordained and absention from what has been forbidden.[35]

Love of the Prophet and Adherence to the Sunnah

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud recited the Qur'anic verse (S III:31)

قل ان كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعونى يحببكم الله

(Say: If ye do love God,
Follow me: God will love you.)

and thus exhorted people to develop love of the Prophet:[36]

ـ اتباع پيغمبر عليه السلام مى بايد كرد قولاً و فعلاً و ارادةً تا محبت حق تعالى بيابند ـ زيرا كه محبت حق تعالى بى اتباع پيغمبر ميسر نيست

(Follow the Prophet in word, deed and intention so that (you may) be blessed with the love of God. (Remember) love of God is not possible without following the Prophet.)

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31. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 58.
32. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 25.
33. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 25.
34. *Malfuzat-i Shah Mina*, p. 44.
35. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 28.
36. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 27.

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He considered love of the Prophet a part of the faith,[37] and explained to his audience that following the Prophet meant two things:[38]

انچه خدا و رسول خدا فرموده اند می باید کرد
و انچه خدا و رسول خدا منع کرده اند نمی باید کرد

(Whatever God and His Prophet have ordered, (you should) do it, and whatever God and His Prophet have forbidden you against you should not do.)

Six Fold Guide-Line

The Shaikh told those associated with him that one who desired to engage himself in spiritual work had to adhere strictly to the following six principles:

i) He was not to come out of his solitude for any greedy or worldly purpose.
ii) He was expected to be always with proper ablutions.
iii) He was enjoined to observe fast always.
iv) He was to observe silence and abstain from involving his tongue is what is Non-Absolute.
v) He has to keep himself busy in constant *zikr* (praise of God) maintaining the contact of his heart (*rabt-i-dil*) with his spiritual mentor.
vi) He had to cut himself off completely from everything non-Absolute.[39]

This six-fold guideline was cited in Chishti mystic circles with approbation[40] and though it did not assume the same importance which the eight fold programme enunciated by Khwaja 'Abdul Khaliq Ghujdawani assumed in the Naqshbandi order, it was looked upon as an effective programme of spiritual culture.

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37. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 135-136.

38. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 95.

39. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 69.

40. See, *Majalis-i-Hasaniya* (MS), p. 3.

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Three Essentials – Taqwa, Tauba, Tawakkul

The corner stone of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's teachings, as evolved to achieve the above objectives, was *taqwa* (fear of God).[41] He believed that all virtues flowed from it and those who "fear God" get their subsistence from the divine source.[42] *Taqwa*, according to him, is an attitude of mind and can be developed only by sincerity of purpose[43] because the mystic path itself is a path of truth and morality.[44]

Then there was *tauba* (repentance). There were three stages (*maqam)* of repentance – *tauba, inabat* and *awba*. Literally these three words mean the same thing but there is a difference of degree and attitude in each.[45]

Another essential requirement was to practise *tawakkul* (total reliance and dependence on God).

Real satisfaction lies in developing absolute faith in God *(tawakkul).*[46] Those who practise it sincerely, God is enough for them.[47] They receive their sustenance from the Divine source.

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41. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 20 *et seq.*

42. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p.21. The argument is based on the Quranic verses XIV : 2-3. Cf. *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*: "Reverence for God and His ordinances springs from fear of God (*taqwa*)" p. 334.

43. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 25-27.

44. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 138.
Cf. *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub* (English tr.) p. 42;
also *Kimiya-i-Sa'adat*, p. 470 *et. seq.*

45. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 217. Cf. *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, p. 295. *Tawbah* is to return from great sins to obedience, *inabat* is to return from minor sins to love, and *awabat* is to return from one's self to God'.

46. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 13,264.

47. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 57.

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A *durwesh* was expected to develop full trust in God.[48] He could ask Him only, and none else, for the fulfilment of his needs.[49] For the general public the course was that in times of need they go to the bazar and do some work, and earn money to satisfy their needs. For a *durwesh* the course was different. He was expected to close tightly his door, sit in a corner of his house and pray to God for the fulfilment of his needs.[50]

The Shaikh further explained that there were four stages pertaining to the fulfilment of a mystic's needs:

i) The first was that whenever any need arose he prayed to God for its fulfilment;
ii) the second was that he did not supplicate God for anything except Him.
iii) The third stage was that he committed his needs to God and did not worry about their fulfilment or otherwise.
iv) The fourth stage was the highest where one did not ask Him even from Him.[51] This is the stage of living for the Lord alone.

Resignation to the Will of God

Likewise there were four stages of resignation to the will of God (*riza*), the Shaikh thought. The first was *tasabbur* which meant that if the worries and calamities of this world afflict a man and his lower soul (*nafs*) induces him to go somewhere and seek a remedy for them, he restrains his material ego (*nafs*) and does not obey it. The second was *sabr* in which too, there was control of *nafs* as in *tasabbur*, but there was a difference: in *tasabbur* one had to put in effort, whereas in *sabr* there was no such effort on the part of the person practising it. The third stage was *tafwiz* which meant entrusting all affairs to God. Whether calamities visit him or he is sent to Hell, it is the same for him. The fourth and the final stage was of *riza* (acquiescence), which was for the Companions of the Prophet and meant deriving the same pleasure both from calamities

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48. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 56-57.

49. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 76.

50. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 80.

51. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 81.

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and blessings which others derive from blessings alone.[52]

Rejection of the Material Attractions of the World

God and Mammon cannot be served alike and simultaneously. Rejection of all worldly desires and material ambitions is the first requisite for success in the spiritual path. Love of the world (*duniya*) is the root of all evils.[53]

Sex and sensual pleasures are like chains which fetter the soul.[54] A mystic should develop *himmat* (courage and fortitude) which means rejecting material glories and wealth without showing slightest inclination towards them.[55] The best man is one whose heart is full of Divine Love, whose body is bent in devotions and whose hand is empty of all worldly things.[56]

Adherence to Shari'at Law

Adherence to the *shari'at* is a *sine qua non* for success in the mystic path. Those who ignore the laws of *shari'at* in any way, no matter how insignificant the matter, fall down from their position. They fail to achieve their spiritual objective. There is no stage of spiritual perfection higher than that of the Prophets and even they cannot afford to neglect the external laws of faith (*shari'at)* though their hearts remain busy in God all the time.[57]

Distinction between Prophetic Consciousness and Mystic Consciousness

Some misguided itinerants of the mystic path laboured under the delusion that prophetic consciousness was attainable by *walis*

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52. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 82.
Cf. *'Awarif-u'l-Ma'arif*, p. 607,620 *et seq.*

53. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 35.

54. Ibid, p. 97.

55. Ibid, p. 102.

56. Ibid, p. 172.

57. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 26.

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also. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh warned against this basically erroneous conception. He told his disciples that the prophetic consciousness started from the point where mystic consciousness ended. The beginning of the prophetic consciousness was the end of a mystic's journey. The spiritual perfection of a prophet was not the result of his effort *(kasb)*, while it was effort which took a *wali* to spiritual perfection.[58] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din thus made it clear that the prophetic sphere was absolutely beyond the mystic power to reach. At a time when different heretical trends had appeared in Muslim society and some eccentric and erratic religious maniacs had even claimed divinity for themselves[59] it was necessary to check heretical concepts percolating to the sphere of prophetic mission. Firm rebuttal of such ideas nipped in the bud a serious dimension of heretical activity.

Rise Above Bonds

Regarding fetters that restricted one's freedom of action, the Shaikh referred to bonds of *shari'at* and the bonds of *nafs* (lower soul). The bonds of *shari'at* were one's wives and children; the bonds of *nafs* were appetites and passions. One had to break both these fetters in order to develop the cosmic emotion. Whoever devloped the cosmic emotion, for him wives, children, parents etc. ceased to be bonds.[60]

Penitence and Self-mortification

The Shaikh advised his followers to subject material ego (*nafs*) to self mortification. They were to eat less, sleep less and avoid company.[61] They could engage themselves in anything they liked but had to keep their hearts busy in *zikr* (praise of God).[62] A *momin*

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58. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 134-135.
Cf. *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, pp. 235-236.
See also, Iqbal's discussion of the differences between prophetic consciousness and mystic consciousness in *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 124.

59. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 8.

60. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 97.

61. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 115.

62. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 122, see also pp. 128-129, giving some details about the way the Prophet taught *zikr* to 'Ali.

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got his subsistence through *zikr*[63], the Shaikh said.

All people need some 'capital' (*sarmaya*) for their different vocations, the Shaikh used to explain to his visitors. A peasant's capital was his buffaloes, seeds and implements; a scholar's capital was his 'effort' and 'piety'; for a *durwesh* it was self-moritification (*mujahada)* through which he could have the vision of Reality.[64] If a mystic missed his *aurad* (routine litanies) even for once, his name was entered amongst the dead.[65] Deriving pleasure in prayers was, the Shaikh said, a sign of the health of heart.[66]

Zikr and Mushahada

In the eyes of the Shaikh vision of Reality (*mushahda)* was a higher stage than *zikr*. In *zikr* there was a feeling of supplication, but this was not the case with *mushahada*.[67]

Khatarat

As a mystic teacher Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh realized the dangers involved in dealing with *khatarat*[68] (feelings which distract the heart) when they cross the human heart and put it on the wrong path. He understood the psychological difficulties involved in dealing with such passing passions, moods and feelings. Some thought that a *salik* reached perfection only when these *khatarat* ceased to trouble his heart. Others said it was not possible to be totally immune from them.[69] One had to live with them, but never entertain them. These may come and go; the mystic should not pause to analyse, check or entertain them.

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63. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 92.

64. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 150,152.

65. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 244.

66. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 253.

67. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 66-67.

68. "Any judgements of separation (*ahkam-i-tafriq)* that occur to the mind" *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, p. 384.

69. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 84.

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Types of Spiritual Experience

From the point of view of spiritual experience there are four types of man –

i) *Salik-mutadarrik-ba-jazba* i.e. one who strives for spiritual attainments on the strength of his knowledge and actions and, as a result, acquires cosmic emotion (*jazba*);
ii) *majzub mutadarrik-ba suluk* i.e. one who possesses Divine rapture (*jazba*) and strives for spiritual discipline (*suluk*) afterwards;
iii) *salik-i-waqif* i.e. one who undergoes spiritual discipline (*suluk*) through knowledge and penitence, but due to some act of omission or commission gets stuck at a place. The spiritual teacher (*pir*) takes him out from this spiritual morass and sets him on the path to further spiritual progress and advancement. Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi considered *majzub-mutadarik-ba-suluk* as superior to *salik-mutadarrik-ba-jazba*. Other mystics think differently. They argue that a *salik* has to bear great hardships in his effort to reach the goal. He is pursued by the devil who tries to lead him astray but he avoids the pitfalls and in so doing he puts in great struggle. The *majzub-mutadarrik-ba-suluk* proceeds on guided by his divine rapture. His *jazba* is so powerful that nothing can distract him. Even the devil cannot distract him.
iv) *Majzub-i-mutlaq* i.e. one who is totally overpowered by divine rapture.[70]

Training of the Heart

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din told his disciples clearly and firmly that the entire structure of spiritual discipline was based on proper training of the heart.[71] The altar (*qibla*) of the heart is God.[72] Heart is the ruler (*amir*) of the body. When it turns away from its altar, the body also moves away from its altar.[73] The divine lights (*anwar*)

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70. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 47-48, 128.

71. Ibid, p. 61. Cf., *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, p. 300.

72. Ibid, p. 61.

73. Ibid, p. 57.

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first descend on the soul and then they are transmitted to the body which is subordinate to heart. When the heart is moved the body is also moved. *Hal* (spiritual condition) is the result of the purity of action.[74] *Hal* is transitory and is not permanent. If it becomes so, it becomes a station *(maqam)*.[75]

Control of Nafs

Spiritual progress depended on the discipline of the lower soul (*nafs*),[76] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din told his followers. If a man disciplines his lower self *(nafs)*, his inner self automatically gets integrated and coherent; if he neglects it, his inner self becomes disturbed and disintegrated.[77]

When the spirit (*ruh*) becomes perfect, it acquires the power of moving upwards in both the higher and the lower spheres, the *'alam-i-'ulvi* and the *'alam-i-sufli*.[78] As the body is subordinate to the heart and the heart is subordinate to the soul, whenever the soul moves upwards, the heart and the body also ascend.[79]

Sama'

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din considered *sama'* (mystic music) a nourishment of the soul.[80] Dara Shukoh's statement that he was opposed to *sama'* is incorrect.[81] He believed that *sama'* transported the listener into the higher realms of spirit. Once some body asked him the following question: When overpowered by ecstasy in *sama'* meetings Qazi Hamid-u'd-din Nagauri placed his head at the feet of Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki. The Khwaja did not remove his head himself. He asked his servant to remove it. Why was it so?

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74. Ibid, p. 57.

75. Ibid, pp. 58-59, Cf., *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, pp. 80-81.

76. For a discussion of the nature of *nafs*, see *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, pp. 1196-97.

77. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 59.

78. Ibid, p. 60.

79. Ibdi, p. 62.

80. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 43-44.

81. *Safinat-u'l-Auliya*, p. 100.

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"When in *sama'* Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din was at the station of Almightiness *(maqam-i-kibriya'i)*. How could he come down (to remove his head from his feet)," replied Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din.[82] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din however enforced the restrictions about use of instruments (*mazamir*) very strictly.

Karamat

The power to work miracles (*karamat*), the Shaikh remarked, was not a permanent faculty.[83] It was a transitory spurt of spiritual energy and was not a basic quality. He resented if anybody attributed any *karamat* to him.[84]

Forbids Prostration

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was firmly opposed to the placing of head on the ground before the spiritual mentor.[85]

Permits Kissing of Feet

Shaikh Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari Makhdum-i-Jahanian told his audience that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud considered kissing of feet permitted. He cited the Companions of the Prophet who kissed the Prophet's feet after his return from *mai'raj* (*Ascension*).[86]

Recommends Mid-day Rest

The Shaikh used to advise his disciples to have mid-day nap *(qailulah)* regularly. "A sufi who does not have siesta, be sure about him that he sleeps the night through", he used to say.[87]

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82. *Khatimah*, p. 127.

83. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 54-55. Cf. *Kashf-u'l-Mahjub*, pp. 235-236.

84. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, Supplement, p. 289.

85. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 157.

86. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, p. 343.

87. *Khatimah*, Urdu tr. *Adab-ul-Muridin*, p. 14.

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Some Moral Precepts

Some of the remarks of the Shaikh derived from the traditions of the Prophet or the sayings of the mystics are very pithy and poignant. For instance, he used to condemn proud and overbearing attitude in social relationship but clearly pointed out that 'pride was justified with the proud'.[88] He considered man higher in position than the angels became the former had to struggle to sever earthly connections while the latter were by nature free from all such encumberances.[89]

88. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 78.

89. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 83.

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Chapter XI

REACTION AND RESPONSE TO IBN TAIMIYYA'S IDEOLOGY

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud lived in an age which had thrown a challenge to the mystic thought all over the Eastern world of Islam and different regions had reacted to the situation in different ways. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's ideas and teachings represent a response and a reaction to this ideological crisis. He saved the mystic movement from orthodox criticism by making a few changes here and there and by attracting large number of *'ulama* to his fold. Ibn Taimiyya[1] (661-728/1263-1328) had initiated a vigorous campaign to reform and resuscitate Muslim society after it had suffered heavily at the hands of the Mongols. Simultaneously with the mobilization of Muslim opinion against Mongol occupation of Muslim territories, he sought to reform Muslim society by drawing it to the *Qur'an* and the *sunnah* as the only protecting glacis against the onslaught of fissiparious forces. He considered mysticism, with its faith in the theory of *walayat* and rejection of government service as factors responsible for weakening the political fabric of Islam. He criticised many mystic institutions and attacked eminent mystics thinkers like Imam Ghazzali (1058-1111) and Ibn 'Arabi (1164-1249) and declared the *sufis* and the *mutakallimin* to be from the same valley (*min wadin-wahid*).[2] He criticised many institutions of medieval Sufism and censured the cult of saints and their pilgrimages to tombs.[3] His influence reached India through his pupil 'Abdul 'Aziz Ardbaili who visited the court of Muhammad bin Tughluq and made such a deep impact on his thought that he kissed his feet in the open *durbar*.[4] Under his influence Muhammad

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1. For brief biographical notices, see Al-Kutubi, *Fawat-u'l-Wafayat*, Bulaq, 1299 A.H., Vol. I, pp. 35-62; Zahabi, *Tazkira-u'l-Huffaz*, Hyderabad 1334 A.H., Vol. IV, pp .278-80; *Ency. of Islam*, Vol. III, p. 42, *et. seq.*

2. *Ency. of Islam*, III, p. 422.

3. See his *Risala Shadd ar-Rihal* in his *Majmu'at al-Rasa'il*, II, p. 53.

4. *Rehla*, II, p. 44.

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bin Tughluq adopted a hostile attitude towards the mystics and sought to change their character and ideology completely. The reaction of Indo-Muslim mysticism to this intellectual ferment is clearly discernible in the teachings of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh of Delhi. He registered his reaction quietly but firmly, without provoking any resistance or resentment.

Muhammad bin Tughluq had, under the influence of Ibn Taimiyya, planned military operations against the Mongols on an extensive scale. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din narrated to his audience the details of Kharbanda's conversion to Islam at the hands of Shaikh Saif-u'd-din Bakharzi.[5] There is much more in this story than one can appreciate at first sight. It shows that the *sufis* had achieved through the force of their character what others were trying to achieve through the force of arms. The Mongol conversion to Islam was the result of the efforts of the *auliya* and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's discourses silently pointed to the success of piety and love where force and resistance failed.

The most objectionable[6] of all mystic practices prevalent in medieval India was prostration before a Shaikh. Eminent Chishti saints, like Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar and Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, did not object to it. The latter did not like it but considered its discontinuance a disrespect to the traditions of his master.[7] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din stopped the practice and declared: "It is not lawful to place one's head on the ground before a creature".[8] He firmly stated his ideological position in these words: "The practice of a spiritual master is no justification. Action should be defended on the basis of the *Qur'an* and the *sunnah*."[9]

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5. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 150-151. For Shaikh Bakharzi, see *Nafahat-ul-Uns*, p. 385.

6. It is, however, interesting to note that while the theologians raised hue and cry against such minor matters as *sama'* (mystic music), they did not protest against this practice of prostration. Probably because in challenging this institution they would have indirectly attacked a custom prevalent at the court.

7. *Fawa'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, pp. 158-159.

8. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 158-159.

9. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 81.

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Excessive respect for graves, bordering almost on their worship, was a negation of the true spirit of Islam. Ibn Taimiyya had justly objected to it, but in declaring all visits to graves as *ma'siya* he reached an extreme where few could agree with him, least of all the mystics. Total abandonment of graves would have meant liquidation of *silsilahs* by breaking their historic links. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din condemned grave-worship but did not disapprove visits to the graves of saints. He declared:[10]

> Respect to graves also has not been commended, but circumambulating round the graves of the elders of religion has been referred to (as permitted).

Some Qur'anic verses which contain anthropomorphic suggestions have been the subject of great controversy in those days. Ibn Taimiyya who had expressed his views on this matter in his *Tafsir-u-Sura-i-Ikhlas*[11] was trenchantly criticised on that account. A visitor once tried to draw Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din into that discussion but he confined himself to a very brief reply and switched on to another topic.[12]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din views about the vision of God are clearly stated in the *Khair-u'l-Majalis.*[13] The Shaikh believed that the vision of God is possible in this world. "Had it not been so, Moses would not have prayed to God for it"[14], says Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din. Ibn Taimiyya has condemned all those who believe in the possibility of the vision of God in this world.[15]

Besides, there are several other subjects on which the Shaikh's views as given in *Khair-u'l-Majalis* run counter to the theories

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10. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 157.

11. *Tafsir-i-Sura-i-Ikhlas*,(Urdud translation by Ghulam Rabbani Lahore 1344 A.H.). p. 161 *et. seq.*

12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 238.

13. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 194-195, 239.

14. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 239.

15. *Al-Wasila*, (Urdu translation by Abdur Razzaq Malihabadi, Lahore, 1342 A.H.) p. 41.

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propounded by Ibn Taimiyya. Ibn Taimiyya condemned *sama'* (mystic music) as an irreligious act.[16] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was a great believer in it. He did not, of course, permit the use of instruments in audition parties, but took keen interest in it and narrated to his audience stories bearing on it spiritual efficacy.[17]

Ibn Taimiyya did not believe in the continued existence of Khizr. He held that Khizr died long before the Prophet of Islam and criticised the popular belief that Khizr guided men to their spiritual goal.[18] Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's views were just the opposite. Several anecdotes mentioned in his coversations illustrate the extent of his disagreement with the views of Ibn Taimiyya.

In Ibn Taimiyya's works there is a very strong condemnation of the *qalandars*. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was not ill-disposed towards them.[19] He could tolerate them in so far as they did not commit any breach of the *shari'at.*

These differences in the religious views of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and Ibn Taimiyya may appear insignificant today, but in the fourteenth century they had great significance. The fact that Ibn Taimiyya had to write separate tracts on these subjects, and that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din referred to them again and again in his conversations is a sufficient proof of their importance for the medieval people. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh's response and reaction to the ideology of Ibn Taimiyya was a balanced one. He brought the Sufi institutions in harmony with *sunnah* wherever there was the slightest clash; proclaimed the supremacy of *shari'at* law and firmly combated the view which assigned to the actions of a Shaikh a status equal to that of *sunnah*. Having thus fortified his position basically, he stood up like a rock to protect the structure and ideology of medieval mysticism.

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16. See his *Risala-i-Sama'* (Urdu Translation).

17. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 42-45.

18. *Ziyarat-u'l-Qubur,* (Urdu Translation with Arabic text, Lahore 1347 A.H.)

19. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 13,14, 48-50, 76, 108, 209, 217.

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Chapter XII

IDEAS ABOUT RULERS AND GOVERNMENT

Like his spiritual master Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud also believed in keeping away from politics, *shughl* (government service) and *jagirdari*. But times had undergone a change. Muhammad bin Tughluq had left no stone unturned in emphasizing to the mystics of his day that service of state was service of religion and that the dichotomy of religion and state was basically wrong. Persistent propagation of this ideology by the state must have influenced in some way the public thinking on the subject. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din tried his best to uphold the concept of *walayat* and keep mystic institutions free from state control. He eschewed government contact and did not, therefore, like to discuss anything about politics or political affairs. The reigning monarch, Firuz Shah, is not even casually mentioned in his conversations. It was, however, difficult to avoid topics or discussions which indirectly reflected his views about political matters.

The Shaikh used to say that whoever engaged himself in government service involved himself in difficulties and worries.[1] According to him happiness lay in *faqr* (poverty). In the houses of worldly men there was nothing but sadness and sorrow. "There is, of course, sadness and sorrow in *faqr* (poverty) also, but it is due to the search of the Absolute, not due to involvement in the affairs of this world, and, in consequence of this sadness, there is joy and delight".[2]

If a man engaged himself at all in government service, he advised his visitors, he should never forget to look after the health of his soul.[3] "A man may serve in the *diwan* provided he treats people justly and well"[4], he said. "When people obtain a little worldly office,

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1. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 104.
2. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 102-103.
3. Ibid, p. 13.
4. Ibid, p. 13.

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they treat the people of God as they like and are not afraid of wounding the hearts of men. After all, the sighs of the oppressed have some effect"[5], he told his audience.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was of the view that the *qazis* could maintain the dignity and honour of *shari'at* if they acted according to principles of equity and justice and treated the king and an ordinary citizen alike and in the same way.[6] He wanted to see the spirit of the *Khilafat-i-Rashida* as an operative principle in the working of the judicial institutions of his day.

The Shaikh believed that the actions of the people determine their fate. "If a thorn pricks a man's foot or an ant bites it, he ought to know that it is the result of his own acts. And no misfortune shall befall you except what your hands have earned." Believing in this fundamental principle, he remarked: "*As you are, so shall be your rulers.*"[7] Its clear implication was that the people had to reform themselves if they wished a change in the character of the ruling oligarchy. This approach was more in consonance with the basic principles of his socio-political attitude. It kept the rulers in the background initially but clearly indicted them for their midsdeeds and linked reform of public life with change in the character of the ruling classes.

The Shaikh's assessment of some of the social and economic developments of the period gives an idea of his views about the role of some rulers of the time. Surprisingly this assessment is different from the generally accepted interpretation of their role.

It is very often said that the market control of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji (1296-1316) was motivated by the militaristic needs of the state. The Shaikh one day narrated to his audience an incident which shows that this view is not correct and that the Sultan was inspired by altruistic and philanthropic motives in enforcing his economic regulations. It was his anxiety to benefit all people (*hama khalq*), and not a section or class of people, much less the army alone. That the Sultan's purpose was well served is borne out by

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5. Ibid, p. 104.

6. Ibid, p. 17.

7. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 50.

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several other anecdotes and references to the prosperity of the people during the 'Alai period which the Shaikh narrated in his discourses.[8]

As a result of the impression created by the historian Zia-u'd-din Barani, 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji has often been represented as a godless king who had scant respect for religion and who, in turn, had no religious sanctity in the eyes of the people. It appears from *Khair-u'l-Majalis* that the people of Delhi had a very high opinion of the Sultan and that after his death people used to visit his grave and tie threads of supplications there in order to get their prayers granted by God.[9] Incidently it may be noted that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din himself used the words *Rahmat-Allah-illah*[10] (may the blessings of God be on him) with the name of the Sultan which shows the respect in which the Sultan was held by him.

Of all the Sultan of Delhi, Mubarak Khalji alone had developed openly hostile attitude towards Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. He used to speak ill of him in his *durbar.*[11] The residents of the *khanqah* could not forget those days of distress and concern when matters had taken a serious turn. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh once told his audience that in Awadh a *majzub* (one overpowered by mystic emotion) was heard crying one morning[12]:

آن ملك تو چه شد و آن چتر چه شد و آن تخت تو چه شد

(What happened to your country; what happened to your parosal of authority; what happened to your throne.)

The same night Mubarak Khalji was assassinated in Delhi.

The age of Firuz Shah Tughluq (1351-1388) has generally been depicted as an age of peace and plenty for the masses. The conversations of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, however, leave a different impres-

8. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 240,185,88.

9. Ibid, p. 241.

10. Ibid, p.

11. Barani, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 396.

12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 227.

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sion. It appears that economic distress was very acute during the early years of Firuz Shah's reign. May be that the situation changed subsequently. The Shaikh often contrasts the conditions prevalent during the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji with those of the days of Firuz Shah.[13] As one who had lived in Delhi during both these regimes and had looked at the economic structure from the point of view of a common man, his observations have great value. He says that during the time of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji there was all round cheapness which had become a tale of the past when he was addressing his audience in the early years of Firuz Shah's reign.

The Shaikh narrates the story of a *wali* who had worked so efficiently for the prosperity and welfare of the people during the time of the Caliph 'Umar that no fallow land could be found in his territory. The Shaikh remained silent for a while after giving his account and then remarked: "All efforts of the *former* rulers were directed towards fostering the welfare of the people."[14] The implications of this remark need no elucidation. Incidently it may be pointed out that when Firuz Shah followed a vigorous policy of agricultural development and irrigational facilities he fulfilled the expectations – express and implicit – in the conversations of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh.

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13. Ibid, pp. 185, 240.

14. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 139.

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Chapter XIII

HIS KHALIFAHS

Muhammad Bihamid Khani writes:[1]

شیخ الاسلام شیخ نصیرالدین محمود را چنـدان مریـدان
با کرامت و معتقدان با سعادت چه در حضرت دهلی و چه
در ولایت اطراف بوده اند که اگر تمامی اسامی ایشان به
تحریر پیوندد کتابی جداگانه باید پرداخت و به تذکرهٔ
اولیاء مسمی ساخت

(Shaikh-ul-Islam Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud had so many spiritually gifted disciples and blessed devotees in the Capital town of Delhi and other regions (of India) that if the names of all of them are recorded it would mean compiling an independent work under the rubric *Tazkirat-u'l-Auliya*.)

The *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat* refers to the following *Khalifahs* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh:

1. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz
2. Mir Syed Muhammad bin Ja'far al-Makki
3. Malikzada Ahmad
4. Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani
5. Shaikh Yusuf
6. Muhammad Mujir Wajih Adib
7. Mir Syed 'Ala-u'd-din
8. Qazi Muhammad Sawi
9. Shaikh Sulaiman Rudauli
10. Shaikh Muhammad Mutawakkil Kanturi
11. Shaikh Sa'id-ullah Kisa Dar
12. Shaikh 'Ain-u'd-din Qattal
13. Shaikh Daniyal
14. Shaikh Qiwam-u'd-din
15. Mir Syed 'Ala-u'd-din Kanturi
16. Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir

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1. *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, MS. British Museum, f. 151 b.

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17. Maulana Ahmad Thanesari
18. Shaikh Zain-u'd-din
19. Shaikh Sadr-u'd-din Hakim

Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani has mentioned two other *khalifahs* of the Shaikh – Shaikh Hamid Lahori and Shaikh Ilyas Sufi.[2]

It appears that Hamid Qalandar, Mir Khurd and others who were associated with Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had also joined the circle of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud's disicples. Despite Sultan Muhamamd bin Tughluq's hostile attitude towards him, Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's reputation and popularity as a mystic teacher spread far and wide and even government officers and their family members joined his discipline. Syed Muhammad Ja'far Makki was the son of a *muqta'* of Cambay,[3] but he joined the *Jama'at Khanah* of the Shaikh and got *khilafat* from him.[4] Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari, Makhdum-i-Jahanian, a very distinguished saint of the Suhrawardi *silsilah* also decided to join his discipleship.[5] Among his other disicples, Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz, Qazi 'Abdul Muqtadir, Maulana Ahmad Thanesari, Sadr-u'd-din Hakim, Maulana Khwajgi, Maulana Yusuf Gada and Khwaja Ya'qub of Chanderi were men of great distinction and were respected for their scholarship. Some of them were interested in *fiqh* and wrote commentaries on work of jurisprudence. Syed Gisu Daraz's knowledge of the mystic classics was extraordinary. With him began the Chishti tradition of writing books on mystical themes. Some *khalifahs* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud settled in eastern U.P.; other migrated to the Deccan but wherever they went they initiated brisk spiritual activity. But if Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh's own life was effected by the Deccan policy of Muhammad bin Tughluq, his *khalifahs* had to leave Delhi when Timur carried sword and fire into the towns of

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2. *Lata'if-i-Ashrafi*, p. 367.

3. *See Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, p. 103.

4. *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, pp. 159-160; *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 137.

5. The *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah* gives his spiritual genealogy in the Chishti order (pp. 279-281). In *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*, he says that he received *khirqa* from Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din (p. 72). Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq says that he was a *khalifah* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 139. See also, Bihamid Khani, *Tarikh-i-Muhammadi*, f. 150a.

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northern India. The organization of the Chishti *silsilah* in Delhi was shaken before it could be restabilized after mass exodus to Daulatabad as demanded by Muhammad bin Tughluq. For several centuries Delhi could not regain its central position in the Chishti mystic organization. However the long age of some of the *khalifahs* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud, like Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz and Syed Muhammad Ja'far Makki, ensured uninterrupted propagation of its ideology in different cities of the north and the south.

Syed Muhamamd Gisu Daraz[6]

He was an eminent *khalifa* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. The author of *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat* remarks about him:

او را درمیان مشایخ مشربی خاص و مذهبی مخصوص است

(He had a particular way and peculiar religious style of his own among the saints).

He planted the Chishti *silsilah* in the Deccan and became the centre of all Chishti adherents in the region. The Chishti mystic tradition which had been introduced in the south by Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Gharib and others, crystalized into a movement under him.

Gisu Daraz was born at Delhi in 721/1321. After his master's death he went to Gulbarga and settled there. He was a prolific writer and no other saint of the Chishti *silsilah* wrote as many books on different aspect of mysticism as he wrote. His commentaries on mystic classics show his insight in the fundamentals of mystic thought. Notable among his works being *Asmar-u'l-Asrar, Khatimah, Hada'iq-u'l-Uns,* and *Haza'ir-u'l-Quds*. His conversations were collected by his son Akbar Husaini in *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*. He died on 16 Zil Qa'dah 825/1 Nov. 1422. Ahmad Shah Bahmani built a magnificent tomb over his grave.

Graphic account of one of his last meetings with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh is found in *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*. Plague epidemic

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6. For biographical notices, See, *Siyar-i-Muhammadi, Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar,* pp. 129,134; *Gulzar-i-Abrar,* MS; Ferishta, II, p. 399; *Rauza-i-Auliya,* pp. 18-25. See also, Nizami's article on Gisu Daraz in *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* New edition, pp. 1114-1116.

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was spreading in Delhi. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz fell seriously ill due to an attack of *khala* (wind in the bowels causing acute pain) and began to pass blood in stool. The Shaikh was worried about his health. After recovery from illness he came to the *khanqah.* Khwaja Bashir, personal attendant of the Shaikh, informed the Shaikh who was immensely pleased. He called him in and as soon as he saw him, loudly said: *Al-hamdu lillah* (God be praised)l and showered his blessings on him. "What was the ailment?", asked the Shaikh. 'It was *khala* and blood used to pass', replied Syed Muhammad. The saint was disturbed to hear this. "It was a serious disease. God in His mercy granted recovery from it", said the Shaikh. Syed Muhammad wanted to make some submission. The Shaikh said that as sun had appeared he had to offer *Ishraq* prayers. "You also go and offer prayers. Come later and tell me whatever you want to say. I will listen", the Shaikh said. When the Shaikh finished his prayers, he called other visitors. Bashir reminded the Shaikh that Syed Muhamamd was waiting outside. "Let him wait", said the Shaikh. Later when only Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir and Khwaja Mahmud Durwesh remained, he called Syed Muhammad, and expressed his concern at his illness and affectionately gave flowers in both of his hands.[7]

Mir Syed Muhammad b. Ja'far al-Makki[8]

His family originally belonged to Makka from where it migrated to Delhi and subsequently settled at Sirhind where he lies buried. He combined excellence in external sciences with insight in spiritual matters. He lived up to the age of one hundred years and worked to propagate the teachings of the *silsilah* from the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351) to the days of Bahlul Lodi (1451-1489). He left a number of works: the *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, the *Daqa'iq-u'l-Ma'ani*, the *Haqa'iq-u'l-Ma'ani, Risalah Asrar-i-Ruh*, the *Bahr-i-Ansab* and the *Risalah Panj Nukat.*

He breathed his last in 1486. Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq has expressed his surprise, bordering on disapproval, about his style of providing autobiographical details in his works.[9] He rendered per-

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7. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 307.

8. For his life see, *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 134-139; *Tazkirah 'Ulama-i-Hind*, p. 83.

9. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 134.

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sonal service to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. Provided water for *wuzu* (ablution), lighted his candle and performed other odd jobs.[10] The exactness with which he mentions the duration of the Shaikh's stay at different spiritual stations (*maqamat*)[11]and narrates his own spiritual achievements[12] is inconsistent with his spiritual mentor's practice of concealing spiritual qualities.[13]

Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani[14]

He was a profound scholar and was deeply respected in the academic circles. Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq calls him:

دانش مند عظیم و اوستاد شهر

(An outstanding scholar and teacher of the city)

He wrote commentaries on *Kanz*, *Husami*, *Miftah-u'l-'Ulum*, *al-Manar* etc. His insight in *fiqh* literature was unrivalled. Maulana Khwajgi learnt at his feet. Muhammad bin Tughluq sent him to Shiraz to invite Qazi 'Azd to India and request him to dedicate his *Matan Muwafiq* to him.

Maulana Khwajgi[15]

Pupil of Maulana Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani, and teacher of Qazi Shihab-u'd-din Daulatabadi, he was an eminent scholar of his day. He carried on instructional work in Delhi with great enthusiasm and attracted large number of pupils to his seminary. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz disclosed to him his spiritual apprehension about the invasion of Timur and the impending destruction of Delhi at his

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10. *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, pp. 87-88, 101.

11. Ibid, pp. 47-48.

12. Ibid, pp. 47-48.

13. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 335.

14. For biographical details, see *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 143; *Subhat al-Marjan*, I. pp. 90-91; *Contribution of India to Arabic Literature*, pp. 266-267, 399.

15. For biographical references, see *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 141-142; *Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram*, pp. 185-186.

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hands. On hearing this he migrated to Kalpi where he breathed his last.

Shaikh Sadr-u'd-din Hakim[16]

Shaikh Sadr-u'd-din Hakim belonged to a business family but he dedicated himself to learning and penitences. His father had requested Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya to pray for a son. On his birth they named him as Sadr-u'd-din Hakim. He was very much loved by Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya who got a *khirqa* prepared for him from a piece of his *jubba*. He entrusted him to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh and predicted his bright future.[17] His letters contain mature exposition of mystic ideology. He was known as a physician also. His grave is in *Qila-i-Dehli-i-'Alai*.

Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir[18]

A distinguished scholar and poet of Arabic, his *Qasidat-al-Lamiyyah*, composed in imitation of *Lamiyyat-al-'Ajam*, "is admired for the elegance of its style, the beauty of the introductory lines, the appropriateness of the *Makhlas* and the fertility of its imagination."[19] Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Daulatabadi was among his pupils. Shaikh 'Abdul Haqq says that his method, as that of most of the *khalifahs* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh, was to ask the students to gain insight in *shari'at* law, as knowing a *shari'at* principle was better than a thousand genuflexions of prayer.[20] His account has been given in *Manaqib-u's-Siddiqin*. He died in 791/1388 and lies buried in the Qutb area on the southern side of Hauz-i-Shamsi.

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16. For biographical notices, *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 143-146; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, I, pp. 473-489.

17. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 144.

18. For brief references, see *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 147-49; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 468-471; *Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram*, pp. 163-184; *Subhat al-Marjan*, I, pp. 75-90.

19. Zubaid Ahmad, *Contribution of India to Arabic Literature* p. 206. See also *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 148.

20. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 148.

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Maulana Ahmad Thanesari[21]

An outstanding scholar of his day, he was well-versed in Muslim jurisprudence and was known also for his poetic compositions in Arabic. His *Qasidat al-Daliyyah* in praise of the Prophet has been widely appreciated. When Timur's forces ravaged Delhi, his family members were also taken into custody but when Timur came to know about his scholarship and spiritual position, he set him free and took him into his cortege.

Azad Bilgrami writes about him:[22]

فاضل بی نظیر و شاعر خوش تقریر است
و مقتبس انوار معنوی و مرید چراغ دهلوی

(He was a peerless scholar and a fulgent poet. He had received spiritual enlightenment from Chiragh-i-Dehli whose disciple he was.)

On one occasion he criticised *Hidayah* in the presence of Timur before a grandson of Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Marghinani and impressed the audience by his deep insight in juristic matters. After Timur's departure from India, he migrated to Kalpi where he propagated the Chishti order with great enthusiasm.

Muhammad Mujir Wajih Adib[23]

He is the author of *Miftahu'l-Jinan* about which Ghulam Mu'in-u'd-din Abdullah remarks:

دستور العمل مشایخ هندوستان و ماوراءالنهر است

(It is the manual of guidance for the saints of India and Mawaraun Nahr.)

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21. For brief reference, See *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p.142-143; *Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram*, pp. 186-187; *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, I, pp. 472-473; Azad, *Subhat al-Marjan*, I, pp. 92-94; Zubaid Ahmad, *Contribution of India to Arabic Literature*, pp. 207-425.

22. *Ma'athir-u'l-Kiram*, p. 186.

23. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 452-456.
For *Miftah al-Jinan*, see *Catalogue British Museum*, Vol. I, pp. 40-41. Egerton, 691.

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Mir Syed 'Ala-u'd-din [24]

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh sent him to Sandila to work there for the spiritual guidance of the people. The Shaikh gave him a shred on which he granted 300 *bighas* of land in Sandila for the expenses of his *khanqah*. Ghulam Mu'in-u'd-din Abdullah says that he got this much of land in Sandila and till his own time (Ghulam Abdullah's days) the descendants held that land.

Mir Syed 'Ala-u'd-din [25]

He was sent to Bangar Mur by Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. He was related to Makhdum-i-Jahanian Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari.

Qazi Muhammad Sawi[26]

Himself an erudite scholar, many scholars of the age were among his pupils. Khwaja Ikhtiyar-u'd-din Irichi (ob.809/1406) was his *khalifa*.[27] He lies buried in Iraj.

Shaikh Sulaiman of Rudauli[28]

According to *Lata'if-i-Ashrafi* he was one of the gifted *khalifahs* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. Many people of Ja'is owed spiritual allegiance to him and he was held in high esteem in that region. Makhdum Shah Safi Rudaulvi was his disciple.

Shaikh Muhammad Mutawakkil Kanturi[29]

His father Khwaja 'Izz-u'd-din came to India from Herat and settled at Ajuli. Shaikh Muhammad Mutawakkil passed several

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24. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, p. 456.

25. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 456-457.

26. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, p. 457.

27. The author of *Tarik-i-Muhammadi*, Muhammad Bihamid Khani, was a disciple of Shaikh Yusuf b. Mahmud, a disciple of Khwaja Ikhtiyar-u'd-din.

28. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 457-458.

29. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 458-460.

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years in the attendance of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh and later received *khilafat* from him and settled at Kantur. When large number of people thronged round him and requested him for recommendations, he sought the permission of his spiritual mentor for recommending cases to persons in authority. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din said: "Baba! Whoever will have confidence in you will not turn down your recommendation." He was a friend of Mir Syed Amir Mah of Bahraich, the famous author of *Risalah Matlub-fi-'Ishq-il-Mahbub.*[30]

Shaikh Sa'dullah Kisa-dar Kunturi[31]

Son of Shaikh Muhammad Mutawakkil, he received *khilafat* both from his father and Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh.

Maulana Yusuf Gada[32]

A poet of some repute, his *Tuhfat-u'n-Nasa'ih*[33] contains juristic principles in versified form.

Maulana Shihab-u'd-din Kasturi, a pious Haji, was a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, but had received permission to enrol disciples from Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh.[34] Ghawthi Shattari has included Mas'ud Bak also among the disciples of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.[35] But this is not correct. He was a disciple of Shaikh Rukn-u'd-din b. Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Imam.[36] He had, however, respectful feelings towards Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din about

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30. MS. personal colection.

31. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 460-462.

32. *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat*, MS., I, pp. 451-452.

33. *Tuhfat-u'n-Nasa'ih*, Nur Press, Lahore, 1283 A.H.

34. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 316-317.

35. *Gulzar-i-Abrar* (MS).

36. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, p. 164.

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whom he says in his collection of poems, *Nur-u'l-'Ayn*,[37]:

شاهنشاهی جهان لطافت نصیر دین
کو داد حسن از رخ خود ایں دیار را

(Emperor of the realm of grace, Nasir-u'd-din,
Who gave beauty to this land by his (graceful) presence.)

37. MS. British Museum Or. 312, f. 24b.
See Nizami, *Salatin-i-Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 413 f.n.

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Chapter XIV

ESTIMATE

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud worked in Delhi for thirty two years after the death of his spiritual mentor, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. His sincere dedication to the traditions of the Chishti *silsilah* saved the organization from dismemberment at a time when, on one side the state was bent upon liquidating the mystic institutions and, on the other, Muslim society was sinking deeper and deeper into sin and superstition.[1] To preserve the unity and cohesiveness of a *silsilah* in such moments of crisis, conflcit and confusion was a Herculean task which needed great vision and dauntless courage to cope with. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud rose up to the occasion and kept the torch of his elders burning. He was like a candle of light and hope in the midst of enveloping darkness. In all appropriateness to his contribution, the people of Delhi called him *Chiragh-i-Dehli* (Lamp of Delhi).

The Shaikh invited all types and categories of people – from a soldier to the minister and from a peasant to the jeweller to a life of pious and sincere devotion to Him. His sincerity of purpose made deep impact on his visitors who considered it a spiritual bliss to be in his company. Common people apart, many of the distinguished scholars of the age joined his discipline[2] and added prestige and impetus to his mystic movement. His reputation as a spiritual guide of outstanding stature travelled far and wide and reached Arab lands also. Imam 'Abdullah Yafi'i,[3] a distinguished figure in the religious

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1. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 7 et. seq. See also Nizami, *Salatin-i Dehli Kay Mazhabi Rujhanat*, p. 390 et. seq.

2. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 236. Mir Khurd writes:

فحول علماء و مشايخ روزگار و اوسط خلق
از صغار و كبار همه منقاد و معتقد او بوده اند

3. He wrote several books, notable among them being, *Rauz-al-Riyahin*, *al-Durr al-Nizam fi fazeil al-Qur'an*, *Khulasat al-Mafakir* and *Mir'at al-Janan*. For brief notices, see *Nafahat-ul-Uns*, pp. 529-530; *Ency. of Islam*, IV, pp. 1144-1145.

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circles, praised his spiritual excellence.[4] Some people called him *mutasarrif* (one who holds any territory in his possession) of India.[5] When Maulana 'Abdullah Mutri of Makka heard about his death, he told Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari:[6]

اليوم ما بقى الشيخ قطب الهند

(Today the *Qutb* of Hind has expired).

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud never went outside India – at least no contemporary work refers to it. But Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari claims to have seen in Ka'ba the place where he offered his prayers (*musalla*).[7] Syed Ashraf Jahangir Simnani says that none of the *Khalifahs* of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya attained the same stature and eminence which Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud attained.[8]

Devotion to Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's love and devotion to his master, who had shaped his personality and given a new and purposeful orientation to it, was extraordinary. So long as the Shaikh was alive, he showed such affection and respect to him that he admired his sincere devotion and called him *"our Ibrahim Adham.*[9] After his death he always remembered him with striking loyalty and love. In a *sama'* meeting held in the *khanqah* after his death, the musicians sang:

مجلس يار همانست ولى يار كجا

(The assembly of the beloved is the same, but where is the beloved.)

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4. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, p. 156.

5. *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*, p. 254.

6. *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*, pp. 89,99.

7. *Jami"-u'l-Ulum*, p. 193.
Sometimes disciples who went to Makka saw their spiritual mentor in dreams or in spiritual trance sitting at some place and named it after them. See *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*, pp. 359, 360, 648 etc.

8. *Lata'if-i-Ashrafi*, p. 362.

9. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim* p. 87.

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A world of historic visions and memories glowed into his consciousness and he felt emotionally shaken and disturbed. Contrary to his restrained behaviour in *sama'* meetings, he threw away his cap (*kulah*),[10] lamenting and crying in deep agony. When he met Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar after the death of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, he wept and cried remembering his master.[11]

Personality Shaped by Sultan-u'l-Mushaikh

Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had weaned him away from egocentric spiritual activity and had impressed upon his mind the value of the service of mankind in the evolution of one's spiritual personality. He thus reports a discourse of his Shaikh:

> "Once Maulana Husam-u'd-din Multani, Maulana Jamal-u'd-din Nusrat Khani, Maulana Sharaf-u'd-din were in the asembliy of the Shaikh (Nizam-u'd-din Auliya). The Shaikh turned his face towards Maulana Husam-u'd-din and said: 'If anybody fasts during the day and prays at night, this is the work of a widow....it may be performed (by anybody), but real devotion which leads to gnosis is *something else.*"[12]

This 'something else' was *ta'at-i-muta'addi* which the Great Shaikh used to explain in this way:

> "Devotion to God is of two kinds: *lazmi* (intransitive) and *muta'addi* (transitive). In the *lazmi* devotion, the benefit which accrues is confined to the devotee alone. This type of devotion includes prayers, fasting, pilgrimage to Makka, recitation of religious formulae, turning over the beads of the rosary etc. The *muta'addi* devotion on the contrary, brings advantage and comfort to others; it is performed by spending money on others, showing affection to people and by other means through which a man strives to help his fellow human beings. The reward of *muta'addi* devotion is endles and limitless."[13]

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10. *Jami'-u'l-Kalim* pp. 306-307.
11. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Auliya*, p. 241.
12. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 68.
13. *Fawa'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, pp. 13-14.

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For one who had spent a quarter of a century in the lonely jungles of Awadh – praying and fasting – it was both a warning and an advice. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya thus transformed his spiritual zeal into a dynamic social ideal and he began to look upon bringing happiness to the human heart equal to the pilgrimage to Ka'ba.[14] It reminds one of Bergson's remarks:

> "The soul of the great mystic does not come to a halt at the mystical ecstasy as though that were the goal of a journey ..... it is the repose of a locomotive standing in a station under steam pressure ..... it waits for the moment to make a new leap forward."[15]

Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's teachings transformed his mystical ecstasy into an *elan* of life and he dedicated himself to service of mankind by striving to reduce sin and suffering.

As Successor of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud proved himself a true successor of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Mir Khurd quotes his uncle Syed Husain who used to say:[16]

> ام روز مقام حضرت با عظمت سلطان المشایخ
> در شهر دهلی شیخ نصیرالدین محمود دارد و ظاهراً
> و باطناً بقدر امکان از روش سلطان المشایخ تجاوز نمی کند

> (Today the exalted position of Sultan-u'l-Mashaikh in Delhi is held by Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. Both externally and internally he does not deviate, as far as he can, from the tradition of Sultan-u'l-Mashaikh.)

The disciples of the Great Shaikh held him in high esteem and looked upon him for guidance and inspiration. Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Gharib is reported to have remarked that if he had not joined the discipline of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, he would have become a disciple of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.[17] 'Afif has

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14. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim* pp. 281-282.

15. as cited by Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Abridged Edition, p. 212.

16. *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*, pp. 236-237.

17. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim* p. 240.

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given interesting details of the mutual love and respect which Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud and Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Munawwar had for each other.[18] Maulana Burhan-u'd-din Gharib reverentially called him *Khwand Maulana Mahmud.*[19] Many of those persons who had been associated with Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya[20] turned to his *Jama'at Khanah* for training and guidance. Even some descendants of Baba Farid Ganj-i-Shakar joined the circle of his disciples.[21]

At a time when the Deccan policy of Muhamamd bin Tughluq had hit at the roots of the Chishti *silsilah* and many *khanqahs* of Delhi had become desolate, the *Jama'at Khanah* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud proved to be an oasis in the midst of a desert: a single man shouldering the burden of a spiritual organization which had grown like a banayan tree under Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. Years afterwards when the citizens of Delhi returned from Daulatabad, they found in Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud's company "the fragrance of the assemblies of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din."[22] He had held aloft the traditions of his master when schism of the soul was rampant and sin and superstition had eaten into the very vitals of Muslim society.

Fascinating Personality

The Shaikh's personality was extremely fascinating, – an embodiment of his own ideal of *durweshi:*[23]

درویشی عالم بی نیازی ایست، عالم بی نیازی

(*Durweshi* is a world of freedom – freedom from want and freedom (from worry about one's own self).

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18. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, pp. 82-87.
19. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim* p. 240.
20. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, pp. 316-317.
21. e.g. Khwaja Qutb-u'd-din Hasan, *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 203.
22. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 241.
23. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 74.

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There was a magnetic touch in his bearing, which was free from all affectation but was full of the milk of human kindness. An elderly person who kept himself busy all the time in prayers and in reading the *'Awarif* and the *Masabih* came to him, excited and worried, recited the couplet:

من که در کوی بتاں پا نه نهادم هرگز
چوں بدیدم رخ زیبای تو سر بنهادم

(I who did not put my foot even in the lanes of the beautiful, placed my head (at your feet) when I looked at your charming face).

and joined his discipline and found the solace his soul longed for.[24]

The Shaikh was always spick-and-span, meticulously dressed in white,[25] with heaps of flowers lying by his side.[26] There was an aroma of piety and purity around him.

Moral Ideals

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud's moral and ethical ideals which he actually practised in life, give him a pre-eminent position in the history of Islamic mysticism in India. Generous and forgiving by nature, he treated even his enemies with large hearted tolerance and never wished ill of them. If on one side he bore patiently the ill-treatment of Muhammad bin Tughluq and never spoke a word against him, on the other he forgave his assailant Turab, provided money for him and helped him to escape from public which had gathered to retaliate upon him. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, in fact, stands in the history of medieval mysticism as a living embodiment of Sa'di's verse

شنیدم که مردان راه خدا
دل دشمناں هم نه کردند تنگ

(I have heard that itinerants on the path of God do not cause embarassment to the hearts of enemies even.)

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24. *Malfuzat-i Shah Mina*, p. 72.

25. *Jami'-u'l-Kalim* p. 112.

26. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 159.

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He took keen personal interest in the welfare of those associated with him in any way, blessed newly born babes, went about to enquire about ailing friends,[27] reduced the burden of their worries and showed them the way to contentment and peace.

Khanqah Open to All

The *khanqah* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh was open to all. Even the *qalandars* who were difficult to deal with came and stayed with him and he bestowed the same care on them which he rendered to other guests.[28] The *khanqah* had an upper floor and a ground floor and guests could be accommodated on both.[29]

Visitors from All Walks of Life

Mystics, *'ulama*, poets, administrators, peasants and traders – all sorts of people visited him and he inculcated in them, in his own unassuming and quiet way, a respect for moral values and a determination to face the frowns of misfortune with courage and resignation to the will of God. His own life was an illustration of how one could hold fast to his ideals in an atmosphere of frustration and gloom. "A visitor who comes to me", the Shaikh once told Hamid Qalandar," is either a worldly man or a mystic. If he is a worldly man, his heart is attached to earthly things. When he enters (my room) and my eyes fall upon him, I ask him about his affairs. Even if he is silent, everything in his mind is reflected in my heart, and I am overpowered with sadness and gloom.... And others come terror-stricken and demand: 'Hurry up and do this'. (If I don't), they speak evil of me and are insolent. A *durwesh* should be patient under all (such) circumstances."[30] Devoting his time to the problems of the people in this manner, the Shaikh became a tower of strength and a source of inspiration to all those who thronged his *Jama'at Khanah*. His deep humanism made his heart bleed for the weak, the destitute and the down-trodden. He could sit even with lepers,[31]

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27. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 116.
Siyar-u'l-Auliya, p. 218.

28. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 184-185.

29. Ibid.

30. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 105-106.

31. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, p. 47.

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fulfil their needs and assuage their worries. His generosity in distributing *'dirham* and *dinar'* to the needy and the worried was known all over the place.[32]

Advice to Visitors

The Shaikh never missed an opportunity of advising his visitors through verses of the *Qur'an,* the traditions of the Prophet and narration of anecdotes, parables and precepts drawn from all walks of life. The didactic significance of anecdotes mentioned in his discourses cannot be over-emphasized. However what needs particular consideration is not so much the factual content as the psychological impact of these stories. He never encouraged or permitted the development of credulous instincts or superstitious ideas. With his sharp and penetrating insight in human nature, he provided clear, pragmatic and morally sound solution of problems. His overriding concern was however to develop God-conscious personalities by creating genuine trust in Him and by inspiring morally split personalities with resignation to His will. He diagnosed every disease and quietly pointed out 'thou ailest here and here'. When externalist scholars visited him, he explained to them the significance of spiritual culture and the value of mystic practices;[33] when mystics visited him he brought home to them the necessity of following meticulously the path of *shari'at.*[34] He advised businessmen to be honest in their dealings;[35] told peasants to combine religious devotion with physical labour;[36] advised women to be regular in the performance of prayers and fasts and treat kindly the slaves and the slave-girls.[37] When Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul, the distinguished *wazir* of Firuz Shah Tughluq, joined his discipline he advised him thus:[38]

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32. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 236.

33. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya,* pp. 65, 210-211.

34. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 238-239, 157.

35. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* pp. 95-96.

36. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 156.

37. *Khair-u'l-Majalis,* p. 134.

38. 'Afif, *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi,* p. 423.

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شما وزیری، شما را همان بهتر که کوشش فراوان و بی حد و بی پایان در کارهاو کردارهای حاجت منداں آب مراد در جوی محتاجان رود

(You are a *Wazir*. For you the proper thing to do is to strive hard and beyond measure to fulfil the needs of the needy, so that the water of hope may run into the channels of the poor.)

He repeated this advice several times and told him to be with proper ablution (*wuzu*) all the time. Khan-i-Jahan acted upon this advice throughout his life.

Advice to the Rulers of the Day

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud's relations with Firuz Shah Tughluq have been discussed earlier in detail. The Shaikh did not maintain any regular contact with him and did not dabble in political affairs of the Empire. However, his expectations from the rulers and his advice to them is clearly reflected in the pages of *Khair-u'l-Majalis*. His main emphasis was on administration of even-handed justice. He used to recite:[39]

عدل شاهاں بہ از فراخیء سال

(Justice of rulers in better than abundance of crops).

The stories of Caliph 'Umar and Malik Alp Arsalan that he narrated before his audience contain pithy advice to the ruler. He remarked:[40]

پانشاهان پیشین را هر کوشش که بود در پروردن رعیت بود

(All the efforts of the rulers of the past were directed towards creating favourable conditions for the prosperity of their subjects.)

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39. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 140.

40. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 139.

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Two Principles of Spiritual Guidance

The spiritual discipline of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud was based on two basic principles. He initiated disciples to prayers and pentiences gradually and in a manner which made prayers and penitences a smooth part of their daily life.[41] He never overburdened a disciple with prayers and penitences. Secondly, he never despaired of reforming even an incorrigible character. Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari Makhdum-i Jahanian once informed his audience that whenever a mischief-maker appeared before the Shaikh, he recited the quatrain:[42]

باز ای، باز ای، هر انچه هستی باز ای
صد بار اگر توبه شکستی باز ای
چون رحمت حق بهر گناهگار انست
گر کافر و مست و بت پرستی باز ای

(Come back (to the path of rectitude); come back; whatever you may be (now), come back (to the path of rectitude). If you have broken your vow of repentence hundred times, come back (to the path of rectitude.
As the mercy of God is for the sinners,
Whether a renegade, or a drunkard or an idol-worshipper,
come back (to the path of rectitude).

Attitude Towards Professions and Earning of Livelihood

We find large number of vocations, like that of jewellers, businessmen, barbers, teachers, cloth dealers, *langardars*, wood-cutters and sellers, gardeners, vegetable sellers, etc. being referred to in the *malfuzat* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. Among the government servants we find him referring to ministers, *qazis*, *nawisindas*, soldiers, *mutassarifs* etc. Many of those who carried these professions or served in these capacities came to the Shaikh and sought his blessings. His view in this regard may be summed up as follows:

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41. *See Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, and *Khair-u'l-Majalis* for a number of such cases.

42. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, p. 301.

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1) He permitted effort to earn livelihood and said:[43]

تعلق بـه کسب مانع توکـل نیست ـ اگـر مـرد عیال دار تعلق به کسب کند و نظر دل او بر آن کسب نباشد، بر حق باشد، او متوکل است

2) He observed that bread earned by following some vocation was commendable.

لقمهٔ کسب نیکو لقمه است

Abdals (spiritually gifted persons who occupy-high position in spiritual hierarchy) earn their bread by cutting wood, selling vegetables etc.[44]

3) He warned that a *durwesh* should not go to the houses of kings and nobles to earn bread or in search of favours.[45]

4) He believed that lust of position and self-respect cannot be combined.

حب جاه و شرف نفس جمع نشود

5) According to him complaining about unfavourable circumstances was not the practice of the Chishti *silsilah*.[46]

6) Teaching *Qur'an* to children is a good occupation.[47]

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43. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 56.

44. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 277.
Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari says:

"بهترین کسبها چهار چیز است :
یکی غزا کردن، دوم تجارت کردن،
سیوم زراعت کردن ،
چهارم صنعت مشروع کردن"

Siraj-u'l-Hidayah, MS., Etawah Collection, p. 21.

45. Ibid, pp. 76-77.

46. Ibid, p. 87.

47. Ibid, p. 107.

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7) Cultivation is a good way of earning livelihood, he said.[48]

(نیکو لقمه ایست لقمهٔ زراعت)

8) He declared that there was no better way of earning livelihood than trade.

(بهتر از لقمهٔ تجارت نیست) [49]

9) He said that there was no harm in service (of any type) provided one did not neglect his obligations to God.[50]

در چاکری مضائقه نیست ، بمشغولی خود نگاه باید داشت و
ترك نباید کرد

10) He was of the opinion that there was no harm to work in the *diwan*, provided one was kind and considerate towards the people.[51]

معامله با خلق نیکو باید کرد، در دیوان هیچ زیانی ندارد

Though the Shaikh permitted government service and recited Sa'di's verse[52]

مراد اهل طریقت لباس ظاهر نیست
کمر بخدمت سلطان به بند و صوفی باش

(The outward dress is not what the spiritually gifted people worry about,
Gird up your loin in the service of the *sultan* but be a *sufi*.)

as the guiding principle in this regard but it appears that it was a decision forced by the situation in which he found himself after the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Prolonged conflcit between State

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48. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 156.

49. Ibid, p. 182.

50. Ibid, p. 206.

51. Ibid, p. 13.

52. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 243.

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and Mysticism had come to an end with the accession of Firuz to the throne. The Shaikh had played a role in his accession. Keeping changed circumstances in view he could not decide otherwise. Despite the opposition of Muhammad bin Tughluq, some families of government officers and large number of army-men had joined the discipline of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. Any suggestion of disapproval of this situation on the part of the Shaikh would have created problems for Firuz Shah and also the government officers. Moreover, the fact should be kept in mind that restriction on joining government service was confined to those who were appointed *khalifahs* and could not be treated as a blanket restriction on government service.

However his real attitude towards contact with the State is reflected in the following story which is recorded in the last *majlis* of *Khair-u'l-Majalis*:

> "I have heard that there was a hungry philosopher. Several days passed without his having eaten anything. He reached the bank of a river. Some gardener had washed spinach there. Some yellow leaves fell there. The philospher ate those leaves. A worldly man reached there. He got down from his horse and showed respect to the philosopher.... Then said: "If you join the service of the Sultan, you would get rid of eating thes leaves". The philosopher said:
>
> اگر تو بریں برگ زرد قناعت کنی از ننگ صحبت اهل دنیا برهی
>
> (If you become satisfied with these yellow leaves, it would save you from the dishonour of being in the company of worldly people).

Spiritual Training of the Soldiers

Shah Mina of Lucknow (ob.1456) has supplied some very significant information about that section of people in which Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh was particularly popular. He says:[53]

> اکثر مریدان ایشاں سپاهیان بودند
>
> (Most of his disciples were soldiers)

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53. *Malfuzat-i-Shah Mina*, p. 52.

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It is difficult to suggest any reason for this. We find *lashkaris* visiting him in the *khanqah*[54], meeting him in the mosques,[55] in Delhi and on his journeys. He was of the opinion that[56]

بعضی لشکریان چوں باز می آیند نیکو باز می آیند

(Some army men when they come back from the camp, come back good.)

One day while enquiring about the affairs of a pious soldier (لشکری صالح) he said:[57]

در طلب دنیا اگر نیت خیر باشد ایں هم طلب آخرت باشد

(If in worldly affairs, the intention is good, it too becomes striving for the world beyond).

According to Shah Mina, from the time of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din the fasts of *Ayyam-i-Biz* (13,14,15th of the lunar month) came to be less strictly recommended because he had to keep the convenience of the army-men in view.[58] However in the case of others we find him insisting on fasts of *Ayyam-i-Biz*. He advised a *nawisinda* thus:[59]

نماز به جماعت بگذاری و غسل جمعه فوت نه کنی و روزه ٔ
ایام بیض داری

(Offer prayers in congregation, do not miss Friday bath and keep fasts of *Biz*).

When in Multan, along with Muhammad bin Tughluq, he saw a man offering prayers with quivers tied to his back. He called him and told him that it had been declared a disapproved act (*makruh*)

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54. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 254.

55. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, p. 352.

56. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 146.

57. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 254.

58. *Malfuzat-i-Shah Mina*, p. 52.

59. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 242.

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in books on jurisprudence. Syed-u'l-Hujjab asked him about the tying of cushions while offering prayers. He replied that it was allowed for the old, but disapproved for the young.[60]

Faith in the Hanafi School of Law

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh followed the school of Imam Abu Hanifa in all details of life. One day he was drinking water in a brazen cup (*kasa-i-royin)*, when a *danishmand* objected to it and said that its use was not permitted by Imam Shaf'i. "We follow our own *mazhab* (school of law) i.e. the jurisprudence of Imam Abu Hanifa."[61] His insight in *fiqh-i-Hanafi* was such that Hamid Qalandar called him "Abu Hanifa of the time".[62]

Knowledge of Hindu Religious Thought

Though no details about the Shaikh's contact with the Hindus are available, the *Khair-u'l-Majalis* gives some idea of his awareness of Hindu religious thought. One day while speaking about the control of breath as essential for spiritual training, he said:[63]

صوفی آنست که نفس او شمرده باشد، المنتهی صاحب نفس،
یك معنی همین است و جوگیان سرآمده که بزبان هندی
ایشان را " سدهـ " می گویند، انفاس شمرده می زنند

(*Sufi* is one who counts his breath. (One meaning of the saying) 'The loftiest in this path is one who has control over his *nafs*' is this. Experienced *jogis*, who are known in Hindi as *Sidh*, count their breath.)

One another occasion we find the Shaikh telling his audience:[64]

" در کتابی آمده است هر که بر این صفتی باشد و بر آن بمیرد
فردای قیامت او را بران صورت بر انگیزند، مثلاً اگر کسی را
صفت شهوات بسیار است او را بر صورت خنزیر بر انگیزند، و
اگر کسی را صفت غضب است او را بصفت پلنگ بر انگیزند "

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60. *Siraj-u'l-Hidayah*, p. 353.

61. *Jami'-u'l-'Ulum*, p. 484.

62. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 12, See also p. 34.

63. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 59-60.

64. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 78-79.

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(It is written in a book that whoever dies having passed his life following any particular trait, on the Day of Resurrection he is created in that form. For instance if anybody had been under the excessive spell of sex, he is recreated in the form of pig; if he had been in the grip of fury (and frown) he is resurrected in the form of panther.)

The source of this view is obviously Hindu religion.

Nostalgic Rememberance of Awadh

Awadh had the same place in Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's emotional life which Badaon had in the life of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya. He talked with nostalgic feelings about the gardens, grooves and graveyards of Awadh,[65] its well-to-do families interested in the culture of the soul,[66] etc. The stories about Awadh are significant as they reveal factors which influenced his thought and personality in the early years of his life.

Loyalty of those connected with the State

The lives of some of the disciples of the Shaikh, like Ja'far Makki, Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani and others, reveal strange trends in the religio-political life of the time when Muhammad bin Tughluq ruled over this country. Ja'far Makki's father was an *iqta'dar* of Cambay during the time of the Tughluq Sultan but he himself came to the *Jama'at Khanah* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din and lived the life of an inmate rendering all sorts of service to the Shaikh – helping him in performing *wuzu* (ablution), providing pebbles for his toilet and lighting his candle.[67] The Sultan who was jealous of his authority could not but be peeved when he found the mystics ready to perform all services in the *khanqah* but refusing to take up even token services in the court. Mu'in-u'd-din 'Imrani, despite all his erudition, behaved as an humble servant of the Shaikh. The Sultan sent him

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65. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 171-171.

66. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, pp. 183-184 for Khwajgi Khojendi about whom the saint said:

ما در حلقهٔ مسجد اوده یکجا می نشستیم

67. *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, p. 159. He served the Shaikh for 4 years, 3 months and 12 days.

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to Shiraz[68] but his basic attachment with the Shaikh remained unchanged. Qutlugh Khan was close to the Sultan but his brother taught *Bazdawi* to the Shaikh's nephew Maulana Kamal-u'd-din.[69] Under the circumstances the Sultan must have realized that the basic loyalties of the people could not be changed under duress.

Last Saint of the First Cycle

Notwithstanding the fact that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din tried as best as he could to live up to the traditions of his master, he did not possess the optimism, geniality and cheerfulness of his master. There is an undercurrent of pessimism, gloom and sadness in his conversations. In spite of his heavy daily programme,[70] indifferent health[71] and worries which people brought to him[72], when Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya woke up in the morning there was an indescribable happiness on his face.[73] But the case with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was different. He woke up wearied and broken in the morning. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din did not marry, but tutored his appetities in such a way that not a trace of conflict could be detected in his life. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din also passed his life in celibacy but the effort to control sex-desire was so great in him that it brought him on the verge of death.[74] In the conversations of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din one cannot fail to find an atmsophere of tears and sadness pervading all through. But we should not forget that the major part of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's life was spent during the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji – an age of expanding territories, hope and buoyancy – and that of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din during the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq – an age of decay, pessimism and gloom. The age of 'Ala-u'd-din had the light of dawn; the age of Muhamamd bin Tughluq had the gloom of twilight. The spirits of these saints were coloured

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68. See infra.

69. *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, p. 175..

70. See, *Siyar-u'l-Auliya* for details of his daily routine.

71. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 257..

72. *Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 105.

73. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 241.

74. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 241.

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by the atmosphere around them and, therefore, what at first sight appears to be a shortcoming in Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din's character was really a shortcoming of his age.

Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was, however, the last great saint of the first cycle of the Chishti order in India.[75] According to Mir Khurd in his last years he had become 'pure soul'.[76] After his death the Chishti *silsilah* which had a highly integrated central structure, lost its former position and provincial *khanqahs* were set up in provincial towns, independent of all central control. Old ideologies and traditions were thrown overboard. The comfortable theory was expounded that mystics should consort with kings, governors and high officers in order to influence them for good. State endowments were accepted and, in return, spiritual blessings and moral support was given to the founders of the new provincial dynasties. The principle of hereditary succession was introduced in the mystic sphere and thus the vitality of the mystic organizations was sapped and the virus of hereditary conflicts was introduced in spiritual life. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was, in fact, the last bulwark against these forces of disintegration. With him the first phase of the Chishti *silsilah* in India came to an end. New problems and new ideologies determined the attitudes and actions of the generations that followed. 'Afif calls Firuz Shah Tughluq " ختم تاج داران دارالملك دهلی "[77](last of the crowned heads of Delhi) as the first phase of the Delhi Sultanate came to an end with him. Similarly Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud was last of the early Chishti saints of Delhi as with him a phase of mystic activity in the capital came to an end. Mutahhar wrote about him:[78]

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75. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din did not appoint anybody as his principal *khalifah*, as Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki, Baba Farid and Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had done. He gave his *khilafat namahs* to many saints, e.g. Syed Muhammad Gisu Daraz, Maulana Khwajgi, Shaikh Sadr-u'd-din Hakim, and Qazi 'Abdul Muqtaddir, but did not assign his mystic regalia to any one. This signified his decision not to appoint any one as his *successor*. When Maulana Zain-u'd-din placed some names before Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din, he remarked: "Shaikh Zain-u'd-din! Tell them to look after their own faith, instead of bearing the burden of others."

76. *Siyar-u'l-Auliya*, p. 241.

ذات مبارك او روح مجرد گشته

77. *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 21.

78. *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar*, pp. 85-86.

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بقیہ سلف و یادگار اہل کرم که کرد ختم خلافت بملك دینداری

Surprisingly enough, but not without sociological reasons, the political and cultural circuits of Muslim activity in the early phase, ran parallel and concurrently and completed their activity simultaneously. With Iltumish began the first serious effort to build up a metropolis in Delhi and Shaikh Qutb-u'd-din Bakhtiyar Kaki initiated mystic activity in Delhi and laid the foundatioin of mystic institutions. Under 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji the political achievements reached their highest watermark and Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya simultaneously transformed the mystic movement into a mass movement and carried its organization to the highest point of effectiveness and efficiency. After Firuz Shah Tughluq, the first phase of the Sultanate of Delhi came to an end; after Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh the first phase of mystic activity of the Chishti saints in Delhi ended.

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Appendix - A

SHAIKH NASIR-U'D-DIN MAHMUD'S FATHER AND GRANDFATHER

There is some confusion about the names of the father and grandfather of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. The *Supplement* of *Khair-u'l-Majalis* gives his genealogy as follows: Mahmud b. Yusuf b. 'Abdur Rashid on page 289, but on p. 282 the name of his grandfather is given as Yusuf. In the *Khilafat Namah* that Syed Muhamamd Gisu Daraz gave to Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din of Gwaliyar he is referred to as Nasir-u'l-Haqq wa'd din Mahmud bin Yusuf (*Siyar-i-Muhammadi*, p. 172; *Maktubat*, p. 151). If the *Khilafat Namah* has been correctly transcribed, it must be accepted as decisive on the point. In the *Khilafat Namah* of Shah Mina Lakhnawi his father's name appears as Yusuf Rashid (*Malfuzat*, p. 230).

The printed text of the *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin* (p. 92) has *Yahya* as the name of his grandfather but in my MS of the same work, *Shaikh Yahya* is mentioned as his father (MS, p. 115). In the earliest MS of *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin* (preserved in John Ryland's Library) his father's name is given as Yahya and his grandfather's name as *'Abdul Latif Yezdi* (f. 131). The *Mir'at-u'l-Asrar* (MS, p. 631), the *Ma'arij-u'l-Walayat* (MS, I, p. 121), the *Shajrat-u'l-Anwar* (MS), the *Matlub-u'l-Talibin* (MS f. 117a) the *Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar* (p. 179) and the *Khazinat-u'l-Asfiya* (I, p. 353) agree with my MS of the *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin*. All later authorities (*Mir'at-u'l-Asrar*, MS, p. 632; *Ma'arij-lu'l-Walayat*, MS, I, p. 121; *Shajrat-u'l-Anwar*, MS; *Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar*, p. 179; *Khazinat-u'l-Asfiya*, I, p. 353) give his grandfather's name as *'Abdul Latif Yezdi*. The *Saba' Sanabil* has Nasir-u'd-din b. Yusuf Awadhi (p. 64). The *Tazkirah-i-'Ulama-i-Hind* mentions Yahya as his father and 'Abdul Latif Yezdi as his grandfather (p. 238). I think the *Khilafat Namah* which is confirmed by *Saba' Sanabil*, correctly records his pedigree.

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Appendix - B

WHY CHIRAGH-I-DEHLI ?

No contemporary writer has referred to him as *Chiragh-i-Dehli*, the title by which he is known today. The *Fawa'id-u'l-Fu'ad*, refers to him as *A'iz Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud* (pp. 119,236), *Bahr-u'l-Ma'ani*, (pp. 117,159), *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim*, (p. 38 et seq.), Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* (p. 535), 'Afif's *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* (pp. 29,61 etc.) and other contemporary works refer to him as Maulana or Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud. The printed text of *Siyar-u'l-'Arifin* (p. 92) has *Chiragh* with his name but the earliest available MS of the work in John Ryland's Library (f 131a) does not contain this word. Perhaps it was added by the copyist/publisher. Later writers have, however, given various reasons for this title:

i) Once Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din visited his master who asked him to take his seat. Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din hesitated in obeying the order of his master as many saints were sitting behind him. The Shaikh told him not to worry about that as he was a *Chiragh* (lamp) which illuminates all side (*Chishtiya Bihishtiya* of 'Ala-u'd-din Muhammad Chishti Barnavi, MS; *Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar*, p. 179; *Matlub-u't-Talibin*, MS. f.117a).

ii) Imam Yafa'i of Makka referred to him as *Chiragh-i-Dehli* in a conversation with Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari Makhdum-i-Jahaniya, (*Ferishta* V.II, p. 399).

iii) One night when Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din was celebrating the death anniversary (*'urs*) of his master, Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq forbade the sale of oil to him. The saint poured water, which burnt like oil, in his lamps (*chiraghs*), (*Iqtibas-u'l-Anwar*, p. 179; *Matlub-u't-Talibin*, f.117a and b.). All these suggestions apart, the title is symbolic of the role that Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh played when there was all round darkness so far as mystic life and institutions were concerned.

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Appendix - C

BOOKS AND BROCHURES ASCRIBED TO SHAIKH NASIR-U'D-DIN CHIRAGH

Authorship of the following works is ascribed to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh, either as compiler or the person whose conversation are recorded therein:

1. *Kashf-u'l-Batin*, a short treatise on spiritual and ethical matters (MS As. Soceity of Bengal, *Catalogue*, p. 635 No.1326 Majmu'a - ff 42-48.)

2. *Saha'if-u's-Suluk*, a collection of letters claimed to be written by Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh Dihlawi. Lithographed Muslim Press, Jhajjar, not dated.

3. *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin*, conversations of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh, compiled by Muhibbulah (lithographed Mujtaba'i Press, Delhi 1309 A.H.).

4. *Aurad-i-Nasiriya, malfuzat* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud (cyclostyled list of *Tasawwuf MSS in Pakistan*, by Ahmad Manzwi, No.135 p. 5).

5. *Raz-o-Niaz*, ascribed to Khwaja Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh Dihlawi (cyclostyled list of *Tasawwuf MSS in Pakistan*, by Ahmad Manzavi, No.409 p. 15).

6. *Malfuzat Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud – Deh Majlis* (cyclostyled list of *Tasawwuf MSS in Pakistan*, by Ahmad Manzavi, No.1243 p. 44).

7. *Risalah dar Tasawwuf*, Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud (6 pages) Ahsan Collection, Aligarh Muslim University Library, 297.7/14).

8. *Maktubat* (Subhan-ullah Collection, Aligarh Muslim University, 297.7 1/3).

9. *Shara'it-i-Wasul-u'l-Haqq*, Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud Chiragh (2 pages), Aligarh Muslim University, Habib Ganj Collection 21/212/3 and 2/305).

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Brief tracts of litanies and prayers which were circulating in the name of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud and have been cited by Syed Jalal-u'd-din Bukhari (*Jama'-u'l-'Ulum*, p. 571), Shah Mina, (*Malfuzat* p. 160), and Shaikh Muhammad (*Adab-u't-Talibin* p. 24), have been generally accepted in mystic circles as genuine and there is no internal evidence to prove or disprove their authenticity. At a time when *Aurad* collections attributed to eminent saint, like Shaikh Shihab-u'd-din Suhrawardi, were circulating in mystic circles, some one connected with Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din could have thought of putting personal recollection of litanies suggested by the Shaikh into black and white. Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya had made a collection of litanies and prayers suggested by Baba Farid Ganj-i-Shakar but it was never made public. In the case of these tracts of litanies, it may be surmised that they represent the Shaikh's suggestions but were not authored by him.

The two works which need careful examination are *Saha'if-u's-Suluk* and *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin*. After the exodus to Daulatabad as demanded by Muhammad bin Tughluq and the dispersal of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-din Auliya's disciples from Delhi, there was a growing tendency to record and preserve the teachings of the elder saints of the *silsilah*. Verbal reports, even popular stories which were found floating down the stream of time, were put in black and white. To consider this literature as an authentic record of the Shaikh's views emanating from him may not be justified, but equally unfair would be their total rejection as fabricated. The Shaikh's teachings as understood by people in general, form the basis of these records. Explanations and elaborations may be the work of those who compiled them. Further, *malfuzat* in the form of discourses or specific themes, are really collections of the Shaikh's views dervied from different sources. Thematic discourses do not represent the spirit of *malfuzat* in which the themes change as the audience changes or as new problems and queries are put forward. The *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin* derives its data from *Fawa'id-u'l Fu'ad* and *Siyar-u'l-Auliya* on one side and the apocryphal *malfuzat* collections or less known works – like *Dalil-u'l-'Arifin, Mahbub-u'l-'Ashiqin* etc. on the other. The fact that in all the ten *majalis* of the *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin* almost the same audience appears – Maulana Muhammad Sawi, Maulana Minhaj-u'd-din, Maulana Badr-u'd-din, Maulana Kamal-u'd-din etc. – throws light on the circle that got this collection compiled. Sometimes the *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin* is called *Dah-Majlis* of the Shaikh. Many of the fabricated *malfuzat* rejected by Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud as fabricated (*Khair-u'l-Majalis*, p. 53) have been cited here as authorities for different statements. Poems of Mu'in Haravi, wrongly ascribed to Khwaja Mu'in-u'd-din

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Sijzi of Ajmer, are also quoted without any hesitation. The *Miftah-u'l-'Ashiqin* is apocryphal and does not deserve to be considered as representing the views of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud.

The *Saha'if-u's-Suluk* is a collection of letters attributed to Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. Its thought content is in harmony with the views of the Shaikh as contained in *Khair-u'l-Majalis* or as referred to in *Jawami'-u'l-Kalim.* The problems have been discussed with clarity and display considerable grip of fundamentals. A thematic letter becomes necessary where training and guidance of disciples on specific matters is needed. As epistolary collection of that type, it appears as a precursor of the *Maktubat* of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi Mujaddid-i-Alf Thani. Some internal evidence shows that this is a collection of the letters of some disciple of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh which has been passed on as a collection of the epistles of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din himself. A letter contains the following remark on p. 57.

چنانچه شیخ الاسلام نظام الحق و الدین بجانب خواجه
ما ذکره الله بالخیر اشارت فرموده اند

The addressee seems to be some Ahmad on p. 69, محب الله on p. 102; خیرالدین on p. 122-124-125, 128, فخرالائمه برهان الملة و الدین on p. 126; سیف الدین p. 154 and so on.

The letters appear genuine and reveal a high standard of scholarship and represent the eagnerness of some Chishti saint – well-versed in the ideology of the earlier saints to provide guidance to his disciples. But the collection cannot be accepted as the work of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh. In all probability some *khalifah* of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud wrote these writers to his disciples.

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Appendix - D

POEMS OF GISU DARAZ, YUSUF GADA AND MUTHAHHAR ABOUT THE SHAIKH

The following poems written by Gisu Ḍaraz, Yusuf Gada and Mutahhar reflect the feelings of the disciples about the spiritual eminence of the Shaikh:

فی مناقب حضرت شیخ نصیرالدین محمود قدس اللّٰہ سرہ العزیز

از سید محمد گیسو دراز رح

دل و جانم فدای آں جواں باد — کہ از وی جان غمگینی شود شاد
مبارک طلعتے میموں صباحی — کہ آید یار میخورده زده باد
غلام و چاکر میگوں لبی شو — بشو از بندگی ای خواجه آزاد
نشستہ بودہ ام محزوں و غمگیں — رسید آں یار من مارا بفریاد
چہ بینم ناگہاں از در در آمد — بخندہ شست دربر بوسہء داد
برفت اندوہ و غم جملہ بہ یکبار — در آمد روح و راحت گشتہ دل شاد
ہزاراں آفریں بر جان عاشق — فدای یار سازد بود و بنیاد
اگر شنید بہ کنج خانہ در دل — خیال جعد یارے ہست در یاد
و گر در خانقاہ و مسجد آید — بجا آرد بسی ذکار و اوراد
مشایخ را کند خدمت تواضع — ببوسد پای ہر زہاد و عباد
نخواہد جز مزید عشق و دردی — نجوید جز وصال یار نوشـــاد
خوشی و خرمی خواہد ہمہ کس — محمد درد و غم یزداد یزداد

شد است بر سینہ صدر ایں مصود
نصیر الحق او را کـــرد ارشـــاد

(دیوان، انیس العشاق ص ٦٧)

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در مدح بندگی حضرت شیخ نصیرالدین محمود چراغ دهلوی رح

از یوسف گدا

شیخ معظم پیر من محمود آن صاحب قران
چون او نباشد هیچکس هم محتشم هم مشتهر

عالم بعلمی همچو او هرگز ندیدم مردمی
اندر کرامت مثل او خیزد کجا دور قمر

او بود شیخ مقتدا اورا جهانی مقتدی
گشتند عامی سالکان چون کرد انصاحب نظر

دارد تمنا عالمی خاك درش سر بر کند
خوشوقت انصاحبدلان گشتند اورا بی سپر

ای شیخ مخدوم جهان مارا بخواهی از خدا
تا رسته گردم از فنا یابم بجنت کشك زر

(تحفة النصایح، ص ٤-٣)

...

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...

قصیده در مدح شیخ نصیرالدین محمود رح

از مطهـــر

دوش آنزمان که از افق مغرب شتا — خورشید خواند سوره و النجم اذا هوی
شمع فلك زبانه فرو برد اندر آب — دور زمین نشانه بر آورد بر سما
گفتی مگرکه یوسف خورشید شد بچاه — کز تیرگی چو دیدهء یعقوب شد هوا
بادی بر آمد از لب دریا که دامنش — گرد سیاه سرمه همی ریخت برفضا
چون ساعتی دو ازشب دیجور برگذشت — بنشست باد و ابر در آمد بانجلا
یلیك ستاره بر سر گردون فروغ داد — چون در بهشت طلعت تابان اتقیا
فراش صنع از ید قدرت برآورد — قندیل های نور برین نیلگون جنا
می جست نرم نرم نسیم از کنار باغ — گوئی پیام دوست همیں داد در خفا
گر کیمیای دولت جاویدت آرزوست — یا گلشن بهشت ازین شاخ بے نما
جسمت خسی نگر نفسی خواجه نو بهار — جانت مسی شمر نظر شیخ کیمیا
بر دست او اگر نتوانی نهاد دست — بارے، بدار این سر خاکی بزیر پا
والا نصیر ملت و دین و دل که هست — نعم النصیر از پس یزدان برو سزا

(اخبار الأخیار ص ۸۵ : تاریخ محمدی ، محمد بهامد خانی : ۱۵۰ الف ب)

...

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مرثیه شیخ نصیرالدین محمود رح

از مطهـــر

ز دور محنت این نه سپهر زنگاری
کدام دل که نه خون گشت ازجگر خواری

کجا بجام طرب مجلسی بنا کردند
که از سپهر ببارید سنگ قهاری

وفا ز عالم فانی مجو که مشهور اند
فلك بخیره کشی اختران بغداری

خزینه ایست سپهر از نفوس انسانی
دفینه ایست زمین از بتان فرخاری

تو ای عزیز که در ملك و مال مغروری
مباش ایمن اگر عاقلی و هشیاری

چه دانی آنکه در اوراق کارخانهٔ غیب
قضا چه نقش برآرد ز کلك جباری

زمانه صلح کند با دل تو یا خصمی
فلك بدشمنی آید به پیش یا یاری

چووقت آن برسد هیچکس نگیرد دست
نه ملك بی ملکی نی سپاه سالاری

بقا بقای خدایست ملك ملك خدائی
که نیست قایم و دائم کسی بجز باری

ز دست چرخ ندانم کجا کنم فریاد
که بر گذشت بما جور او ز بسیاری

جهان بماتم خواجه نصیر دین محمود
هزار گونه فغان کرد نوحه و زاری

بقیهء سلف و یادگار اهل کرم
که کرد ختم خلافت بملك دینداری

مهیمنا، ملکا، منعما، خداوندا
بحق نعمت قرآن و دولت قاری

برحمت تو که عام ست در جهان بانی
بعزت تو که خاص ست در جهانداری

که روح اعظم آن شیخ پیشوای کرم
که مقتدای جهان بوده است ز اخباری

ندیم قربت خود کن غریق رحمت خویش
مجاورم رسل و انبیا ز مختاری

بساط صحن ده از حلهای فردوسی
غلاف قبر کن از پردهای غفاری

اخبار الأخیار ص: ۸۶ ـ ۸۵ ؛
تاریخ محمدی، محمد بهامد خانی (قلمی)

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Appendix - E

GRAVES AND BUILDINGS AROUND THE TOMB

1. In the courtyard of the tomb of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh a number of eminent figures lie buried, particularly noteworthy being the following:
   i) A grandson of Shaikh Farid Ganj-i-Shakar under a *burj*.
   ii) Maulana Zain-u'd-din Ali, nephew of the Shaikh, under another *burj*.
   iii) Maulana Kamal-u'd-din 'Allama, other nephew of the Shaikh from whom the main line of the *silsilah* spread. Besides, there are graves of Faiz Talab Khan Bangash, Mufti Sadr-u'd-din, Khwaja Tahir and others. Posterity has looked upon this courtyard with feelings of deep reverence as it is studded with graves of distinguished figures. In the precincts of the *dargah* there are buildings known as *Majlis Khanah*, *Musafir Khanah* etc. which give an idea of the early condition of *dargah*. Muhammad Habibullah writes:

مرقد شریفش زیارت خلائق است و قلعچه گرد
مزار فیض آثار بوقت محمد شاه بادشاه حافظ
خدمتگار خاں خواجه سرائے بنا کردہ.

Zikr-i- Jami' Auliya-i Delhi, MS, British Museum, Or. 1746 ff. 2Ib-22b.

2. The door way to the mausoleum was built by Firuz Shah Tughluq in 775/1373 as mentioned earlier.

3. A *takht* carved out of wood in one piece is placed in the *dargah*. It was sent from Bengal by Dakhani Beg in 1143/1730.

4. At the back of the *dargah* stands the tomb of Sultan Bahlul Lodi. (For details, Zafar Hasan, *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments in Delhi*, II. p. 238.) Its construction so near the tomb of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din Chiragh shows Afghan sentiments of affection and veneration for the Shaikh.

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5. The *Sat Pulla* near the tomb of the Shaikh was built by Muhammad bin Tughluq. It is a sluice two hundred feet long intended to regulate the flow of water on the stream which crossed the city of Jahanpanah and fell eventually into the Jumna river. It was however used as *Shikargah* by Firuz Shah Tughluq. Sir Syed has criticised irreligious and superstitious activities that went on there. *(Athar-u's-Sanadid,* p. 23; *Waqi'at,* III, p. 102-104).

6. Near the *Sat Pulla* is the *Khirki* mosque which is interesting in certain respects and follows Turkish architectural traditions *(See Athar-u's-Sanadid,* p. 24; *Waqi'at,* III, pp. 104-106).

7. An important *dargah* in the vicinity of the tomb of Shaikh Nasir-u'd-din is that of Shaikh Salah-u'd-din, for whom see *Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar,* p. 66. Another well-known *dargah* is that of Yusuf Qattal *(Akhbar-u'l-Akhyar,* p. 25). For details Sir Syed, *Athar-u's-Sanadid*: (i) ed. Moinul Haq, Karachi 1966. (ii) ed. Khaliq Anjum, Delhi 1990; Bashir-u'd-din, *Waqi'at-i Dar ul Hakumat-i Delhi,* Agra 1916; Tatsuro Yamamoto, Matsuo Ara and Tokifusa Tsukinowa, *Delhi, Architectural Remains of the Sultanate Period,* Tokyo, 1967; Matsuo Ara, *Dargahs in Medieval India,* Tokyo 1977.

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